FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-039
Monday
28 February 1994

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-039 CONTENTS *28 February 1994*

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab-Israeli Talks

- Sha'th Announces Postponement of Upcoming Cairo Talks *[MENA]* 1
- Arabs Suspend Washington Peace Talks After Hebron Shooting 1
  - Syrian Envoy Announces Suspension *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 1
  - Israeli Sources Regret Suspension *[Jerusalem Radio]* 1
  - Jordan's al-Hasan Announces Suspension *[Amman Radio]* 2
- Butrus-Ghali Expresses Concern Over Hebron Shooting *[AFP]* 2
- PLO Official Demands Reopening Settlers' Issue *[Jerusalem TV]* 3
- PLO Envoy: UNSC Action on Hebron Necessary *[AFP]* 3
- Reply to PLO 'Questions' to Determine Fate of Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 3
- Official: Approximately Half of Accord Finalized *[Tel Aviv DAVAR 25 Feb]* 3

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

- Arab League Holds Israel Responsible for Shooting *[MENA]* 5
- Arab League Chief 'Strongly Condemns' Hebron Attack *[MENA]* 5
  - Israel's 'Procrastination' 'Unacceptable' *[MENA]* 5
- Arab League Official Blames Israel for Hebron Massacre *[MENA]* 6
- GCC, Arab Red Crescent Condemn Hebron Killings *[SPA]* 6

Palestinian Affairs

- 'Arafat Reacts to Massacre at Hebron Mosque 6
  - Insists on UN Resolution *[London MBC TV]* 6
  - Accuses IDF of 'Full Involvement' *[Cairo Radio]* 7
  - Repeats Accusations of IDF 'Collusion' *[Tunis TV]* 8
  - Stresses 'Conspiracy' by Settlers, Army *[Paris TV]* 8
  - Expresses Need for International Protection *[Paris TV]* 8
  - Sends Letter to EU President *[AFP]* 9
  - Accepts Clinton Bid for Washington Talks *[MENA]* 9
  - Rejects Israeli Cabinet's Response *[AFP]* 10
  - Calls Israeli Measures 'Hollow', 'Weak' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 10
  - Explains Effect on Peace to Mubarak *[MENA]* 12
  - Discusses Bid for Washington Talks With Mubarak *[Algiers VOP]* 12
- Al-Tibi Reports PLO Criticism of Cabinet Decisions *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 12
- 'Arafat Aide on Effect of Massacre on Peace Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 12
- 'Arafat Aide: Talks To Continue; U.S. 'Responsible' *[AFP]* 13
- 'Arafat Aides Say Majority Favors Continuing Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 14
- Ghawshaw on Recall of Negotiators, Clinton Proposal *[MENA]* 14
- Executive Committee Says U.S. Initiative 'Formal' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 15
- PLO Rejects Israeli Government Decisions *[MENA]* 15
- PLO To Send Special Envoy to Washington *[Kuwait Radio]* 16
- Sources Report Efforts Toward Rabin-'Arafat Meeting *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 28 Feb]* 16
- 'Abd-Rabbuh Comments on Hebron Attack, Talks 16
  - Settlements Must Be Removed *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 16
  - Rejects Israeli Version of Massacre *[AFP]* 17
  - Accuses Israeli Army of 'Collusion' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 17

Demands Security Council Session *[London MBC TV]* 18
Calls Israeli Decisions 'Insult' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 18
Al-Nashashibi Urges Moving to 'Final Status' Talks *[SANA]* 19
Al-Husayni Interviewed on Future of Peace Talks 19
Talks Should Focus on Final Settlement *[Jerusalem TV]* 19
Says Settlements 'Time Bomb' *[Cairo International* 20
Calls For Israeli Action Against Colonists *[Rome L'UNITA 26 Feb]* 21
Sha'th Stresses Need for Palestinians' Protection *[MENA]* 21
Sha'th: PLO To Discuss Protection Demands *[Tunis TV]* 22
Qaddumi on Tunis Meeting, U.S. Invitation *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 22
Protection Before Resumption of Talks *[Amman Radio]* 24
'Urayqat: Peace, Settlements 'Mutually Exclusive' *[Jerusalem International]* 24
Negotiating Team Member 'Asfur on Hebron Massacre *[MENA]* 25
Views Future of Peace Talks *[HA'ARETZ 27 Feb]* 25
PLO Envoy Calls on Israel to Disarm Settlers *[Rome TV]* 26
AFP Rounds Up Reaction to Hebron Massacre 26
'Enraged' Camp Citizens Call For Revenge *[JORDAN TIMES 26 Feb]* 27
Arab League Envoy Urges Removal of Settlements *[MENA]* 28
'Hardline' Groups Vow 'Revenge' for Massacre 28
Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Others React *[AFP]* 28
Hamas Warns Negotiators To Withdraw *[JORDAN TIMES 28 Feb]* 29
Islamic Jihad Vows to Revenge Hebron Deaths *[Al-Quds Radio]* 30
Islamic Jihad-al-Aqsa Battalions Statement *[AL-RA'Y 26 Feb]* 30
PFLP-GC: Attack 'Fruit' of Gaza-Jericho *[SANA]* 30
Ahmad Jibril Vows 'Retribution' *[Al-Quds Radio]* 30
PFLP-GC Official Criticizes 'Arafat *[SANA]* 31
PFLP, PLF, Hamas Hold U.S., PLO Responsible *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 31
Hawatimah, Others Condemn Attack *[SANA]* 31
'Alliance' Urges Escalating Intifadah *[SANA]* 32
PNC Members Meet in Jordan, Issue Statement *[PETRA-JNA]* 32
Dissident Fatah Movement Reacts, Issues Statement 32
'Massacre' Will Not Go Unpunished *[AL-DUSTUR 26 Feb]* 32
Fatah Statement Blames 'Arafat *[AL-DUSTUR 28 Feb]* 33
Hebron Fatah Movement Cancels Cease-fire *[AL-DUSTUR 28 Feb]* 33
Cairo Fatah Envoy Gives Casualty Count of Hebron *[MENA]* 33
Contacts Made To Convene Fatah Revolutionary Council *[AL-DUSTUR 28 Feb]* 34
Arab Liberation Front Urges Armed Response *[INA]* 34
Party Urges Protection of Palestinians, Halt to Talks *[SANA]* 34
Al-Sa'iqah: Hebron 'Crime' Result of Oslo Accord *[Al-Quds Radio]* 35
PNSF Head Urges PLO, Syrian Coordination *[SANA]* 35
Bayt al-Maqdis Group Condemns Hebron Shooting *[Al-Quds Radio]* 35
Commentaries Condemn 'Atrocious' Hebron Massacre 35
'Premeditated' Shooting Condemned *[Sanaa VOP]* 35
Massacre: Sign of Israeli Intentions *[Algiers VOP]* 36
Crime Puts Talks at 'Serious Crossroad' *[Baghdad VOP]* 36
Palestinians Urged To Expel Occupation *[Baghdad VOP]* 37

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

President, Foreign Minister React to Hebron Killings 38
Mubarak Expresses 'Deep Concern' *[MENA]* 38
Clinton Calls Mubarak *[Cairo Radio]* 38
Musa Briefs Security Council *[Cairo Radio]* 38
Other Events Related to Hebron Attack Noted 39
Envoy to Israel Recalled *[VOM]* 39
Airport Placed on Alert *[MENA]* 39
Security 'Tightened' Around Israeli Interests *[VOM]* 39
Islamic Group Orders Members To Escalate Attacks *[VOL]* 39
'Nearly 10,000' Students Protest Attack on 26 Feb *[AFP]* 39

  - Protests Continue 27 Feb *[MENA]* 39
- Consultative Council Condemns Hebron Attack *[Cairo Radio]* 40
  - Awqaf Minister Comments *[MENA]* 40
- Parliamentary Committee Head Comments on Event *[MENA]* 40
  - Other Party Officials React *[MENA]* 41
- Dailies, Commentaries React to Hebron 'Massacre' *[MENA]* 42
  - AL-AHRAM Urges Security for Palestinians *[Cairo Radio]* 42
  - Commentary Assesses Impact of Event *[Cairo Radio]* 43
  - Commentary: Shooting Sounded 'Sinister' Alarm *[Cairo Radio]* 43
- Musa Laments 27 Feb Beirut Church Bombing *[MENA]* 44

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

- Foreign Ministry: Hebron Incident 'Reprehensible' *[WAKH]* 45

Kuwait

- Foreign Ministry Spokesman Comments on Hebron Incident *[KUNA]* 45
- Bomb Explodes at Cinema in Kkaytan 28 Feb *[KUNA]* 45

Oman

- Foreign Ministry Denounces Hebron as 'Heinous Crime' *[SPA]* 45

Qatar

- Foreign Minister Comments on Hebron, Peace Process *[WAKH]* 46

Saudi Arabia

- 'Responsible Source:' Attack Bore Marks of 'Extremism' *[SPA]* 46
  - Reaction of Dailies Highlighted *[SPA]* 46

United Arab Emirates

- 'Responsible Source' Blames Israel for Hebron Event *[WAKH]* 46

Yemen

- Ministry, 'Unofficial' Circles Urge End to Hebron Events *[Sanaa Radio]* 47

IRAQ

- Al-Sahhaf Condemns 'Zionist Crime,' Double Standards *[INA]* 48
- Assembly Condemns Hebron Deaths, 'Capitulatory' Accords *[Baghdad Radio]* 48
- Party Official: Coexistence With 'Zionists' Impossible *[INA]* 48
- Popular Forces Conference Head Condemns Hebron 'Crime' *[Baghdad Radio]* 49
- Newspapers Comment on Killings at Hebron Mosque 49
  - AL-QADISIYAH, AL-'IRAQ, AL-JUMHURIYAH: 26 Feb *[INA]* 49
  - AL-THAWRAH: 27 Feb *[INA]* 50
  - AL-THAWRAH, AL-QADISIYAH: 28 Feb *[INA]* 51
- Minister Assails Reports on Marshland Flooding *[INA]* 51

ISRAEL

- Rioting, Clashes Throughout Country Cause Casualties 52
  - Over 40 Casualties in Incidents *[Jerusalem Radio]* 52
  - 9 Killed in Clashes *[AFP]* 52
  - Update on Casualty Toll *[Jerusalem Radio]* 52

  - Incidents Continue *[Jerusalem Radio]* 52
  - Riots in Yafo, Nazareth, Other Israeli Towns *[Jerusalem Radio]* 53
  - More on Yafo Riots; 1 Killed Near Jerusalem *[Jerusalem Radio]* 53
  - IDF Wounds Israelis; Incidents Continue *[Jerusalem Radio]* 53
  - Yafo Rioters Released; Clashes in Nazareth *[Jerusalem Radio]* 54
- Cabinet Members Holds Special, Regular Meetings 54
  - Special Meeting Ends *[Jerusalem Radio]* 54
  - Announcement After Special Meeting *[Jerusalem TV]* 55
  - Cabinet To Consider Options *[Jerusalem TV]* 55
  - Sarid on Cabinet Decisions *[Jerusalem Radio]* 56
  - More on Decisions; Netanyahu Comments *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
- Letter of Appointment Issued to Inquiry Commission *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
  - Settlement Council Approves Inquiry *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
- Government Imposes Curfew, Closure of West Bank, Gaza 57
  - Territories Closed; Hebron Jews Detained *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
  - Qiryat Arba' Closure Not Observed *[Jerusalem Radio]* 58
  - Curfew Throughout West Bank *[Jerusalem Radio]* 58
- Prime Minister Rabin Reacts to Hebron Incident 58
  - To Meet With Israeli Arabs *[Jerusalem Radio]* 58
  - Speaks With Envoys, Clinton *[Jerusalem Radio]* 58
  - Comments on Cabinet Decisions *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 59
  - Compares Killer to Hamas, Islamic Jihad *[Jerusalem Radio]* 60
  - 'Expected' PLO Pull Out From Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 60
- Foreign Minister Peres Reacts to Hebron Incident 60
  - Rejects International Force *[Jerusalem Radio]* 60
  - On Steps Against Violent Settlers *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 61
  - Regrets PLO Suspension of Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 62
- Government Officials React To Hebron Incident 62
  - Comments by Sarid, Shahal *[Jerusalem Radio]* 62
  - Minister Sees Talks Accelerating *[AFP]* 63
  - Tzaban, Rubinstein Back Anti-Kakh Moves *[Jerusalem Radio]* 63
  - Chief of Staff Baraq Comments *[Jerusalem Radio]* 63
  - Beilin Rejects International Force *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 64
  - Envoy to UN on UN Proposals, Settlers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 64
  - Meretz, Aloni Urge Measures *[Jerusalem Radio]* 65
  - Beilin: U.S. Help Needed in Peace Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 65
  - Sarid Urges Resuming Peace Talks *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 66
  - Bar'am Calls For Removing Settlers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 66
  - Ben-Eli'ezer on Dismantling Settlements *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 67
- President Weizman Tours Hebron, Qiryat Arba' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 67
- Rabinovich: U.S. Holding Consultations on Massacre *[Jerusalem Radio]* 67
- Security at Patriarch's Cave Transferred *[Jerusalem TV]* 68
- Zvili Sends 'Arafat Message of Condolences *[Jerusalem Radio]* 68
- Bethlehem Mayor Stresses Need To Disarm Settlers *[Cairo Radio]* 69
- Kakh Members To Be Given Detention, Banishment Orders *[Jerusalem Radio]* 69
- Jewish Organization Warns of Retaliation *[Jerusalem Radio]* 70
- 'Islamic Extremists' Threaten Reprisals for Hebron *[AFP]* 70
- Goldstein Reportedly Beaten To Death by Worshipers *[Jerusalem Radio]* 70
  - Buried, Praised in Qiryat Arba' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 70

JORDAN

- Government Reacts to Attack at Hebron Mosque 71
  - King Husayn Denounces 'Heinous Crime' *[Amman Radio]* 71
  - King Offers Condolences for Victims *[Amman TV]* 71
  - Further on King's Remarks *[Amman TV]* 71
  - Prime Minister Denounces 'Criminal Act' *[Amman Radio]* 72
  - Foreign Affairs Minister Condemns Attack *[Amman TV]* 72
  - Envoys Summoned; Israel 'Fully Responsible' *[Amman Radio]* 73
  - Three-Day Mourning Period Announced *[Amman TV]* 73
  - Cabinet Issues Statement on 'Crime' *[Amman Radio]* 73

  - Politicians, Others Condemn Massacre *[JORDAN TIMES 26 Feb]* 74
  - Al-Majali Briefs Senate *[Amman Radio]* 75
  - Senate 'Vehemently' Condemns Incident *[PETRA-JNA]* 76
  - House Condemns 'Mournful Event' *[PETRA-JNA]* 77
  - Arab Nation Urged To Confront Aggression *[JORDAN TIMES 27 Feb]* 77
- Marches Staged in Amman To Protest Hebron Attack *[JORDAN TIMES 27 Feb]* 78
  - Protesters Call For 'Arafat Ouster *[JORDAN TIMES 28 Feb]* 78
  - British Tourist Stabbed *[Amman Radio]* 79
- Donation Campaign for Families of Victims Launched *[Amman TV]* 79
- Paper Blames U.S., Israel Blamed for Attack *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 27 Feb]* 80
- International Protection for Palestinians Urged *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 27 Feb]* 81
- Paper: 'Real Reply' to Hebron Massacre Detailed *[AL-DUSTUR 28 Feb]* 81
- Husayn Calls al-Hirawi, Denounces Church Incident *[Amman TV]* 82
  - King Sends Condolatory Cable *[PETRA-JNA]* 82
- Paper: Israel Behind Lebanese Church Massacre *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 28 Feb]* 82

LEBANON

- 'Big Explosion' in Church Reported 27 Feb; Casualties Reported *[RFL]* 83
  - 8 dead, 25 Injured *[VOL]* 83
  - Interior Minister Comments *[VOL]* 83
  - Radio Updates Casualties *[Beirut Radio]* 84
- President, Others Comment on Church Bombing 84
  - Al-Hirawi Addresses Nation *[Beirut Radio]* 84
  - Information Minister Blames Israel *[Beirut Radio]* 84
  - Prime Minister Comments *[Beirut Radio]* 85
  - Speaker Urges Vigilance *[Beirut Radio]* 85
  - Church Official Comments *[Beirut Radio]* 85
  - Fadlallah Blames Israel *[VOL]* 85
  - Syria's President Condemns Blast *[Beirut Radio]* 85
  - Amal Comments *[Beirut Radio]* 85
  - Information Minister Comments *[Beirut Radio]* 86
- 28 Feb Declared Day of Mourning for Victims *[Beirut Radio]* 86
- Security Services Investigating Bombing *[VOL]* 87
- Buwayz Interviewed on Bombing, Peace Talks, Hebron *[Beirut Radio]* 87
- Prime Minister, Official, Parties React to Hebron Event 87
- President Urging UN Action *[Beirut Radio]* 87
  - Buwayz: Attack Aimed at Ruining Negotiations *[VOL]* 87
  - Deputy Speaker Comments *[Beirut Radio]* 88
- Leaders Declare Day of Mourning for Hebron Deaths *[Beirut Radio]* 88
- Sidon Observes General Strike To Protest Hebron *[Voice of the Mountain]* 88
- Demonstrators Protest Hebron Killings, PLO's 'Arafat *[AFP]* 88
- Commentary Blames Israel, U.S. for Hebron Incident *[VOM]* 89
- Dailies Publish Reaction to Hebron Killings 90
- Demonstrators Burn 'Arafat Effigy at Protest March *[AFP]* 91

SYRIA

- Spokesman: End Occupation Within Talks Framework *[Damascus TV]* 92
- People's Assembly Denounces 'Ugly Massacre' in Hebron *[Damascus Radio]* 92
- Al-Asad Receives King Husayn Phone Call on Hebron *[Damascuw Radio]* 92
- Golan Demonstrations Denounce Hebron Attack *[Damascus Radio]* 92
- Palestinian Camps on Strike Over Hebron Killings *[Damascus Radio]* 92
- Unions Condemn Hebron Attack, 'Double Standards' *[Damascus Radio]* 93

SOUTH ASIA

Iran

- President, Groups, Dailies Respond to Hebron Attack 94
  - President Blames U.S., Israel *[Tehran Radio]* 94

Cabinet Declares Day of Mourning *[Tehran TV]* 94
Khamene'i Calls Attack 'Model' Crime *[Tehran Radio]* 94
Khamene'i Message Disseminated' *[Tehran Radio]* 95
Velayati Calls for 'Urgent' ICO Meeting *[Tehran TV]* 95
Majles Speaker: Crime 'Preplanned' *[Tehran TV]* 95
Vice Speaker Comments *[IRNA]* 96
HAMAS Head: Act 'Predetermined' *[Tehran TV]* 96
Yazdi, Iranian Jewish Community Reacts *[Tehran Radio]* 96
Muslims Urged To Show 'Correct' Reaction *[Tehran International]* 96
Islamic Jihad Envoy Comments *[Tehran Radio]* 97
'Cross Section' of Reactions Noted *[IRNA]* 98
Dailies: Act To Entail 'Grave Consequences' *[IRNA]* 98
Country Ready To Aid Victims *[Tehran Radio]* 99
Commentary on Implications of Hebron Incident *[Tehran Radio]* 100
Commentary Examines Goals Behind Crime *[Tehran International]* 101
Explanations of Attack Questioned *[Tehran International]* 102
U.S. Reaction To Events Viewed *[Tehran International]* 102
Commentary Says Coexistence 'Questionable' *[Tehran Radio]* 103
Regional, International Impact of Crime Viewed *[Tehran Radio]* 104

Arab-Israeli Talks

Sha'th Announces Postponement of Upcoming Cairo Talks

NC2602103194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian delegation to negotiations with Israel for the implementation of the temporary self-rule in Gaza and Jericho first, has announced that the next round of Palestinian-Israeli talks, scheduled to take place in Cairo Monday, has been postponed until after the Palestinian leadership has determined its position on U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation to talks in Washington.

He told MENA that he and the Palestinian delegation will leave for Tunis Sunday morning to meet with the Palestinian leadership under the chairmanship of president 'Arafat to decide on a response to the U.S. President's invitation.

What matters is not the venue of the talks, he said; the talks in Egypt, both in Cairo or Taba, were going very well, and Egypt is providing all possible support, Sha'th explained.

The issue is not where we negotiate but what we negotiate, he said. He urged international protection for the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles reached in Oslo.

Dr. Sha'th accused the Israeli Army of colluding with the Israeli settlers who carried out the criminal massacre and the horrible killings in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn yesterday.

Without genuine protection against the Israeli settlers, the Palestinian people will face daily massacres, he said.

These criminal acts, Sha'th added, cannot be perpetrated by individuals. He noted the bad emotional climate and the collusion of the Israeli Army with the perpetrators of massacres.

Sha'th wondered where the Israeli Army was, which usually fills the plazas of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque. He noted that the Palestinians pray daily in the mosque under the guns of the Israelis. Where was the Israeli Army at the time of the massacre, he wondered.

Sha'th stressed that eight worshipers were killed by Israeli Army gunfire at the mosque's entrance while trying to leave.

Sha'th stressed the need for reconsidering the form, method, and demands of the Israeli negotiators.

He pointed out that two-thirds of the draft security agreement worked out during the talks in Cairo and Taba deal with Israeli demands for the protection of settlers. It is the Palestinian people that really need protection, he stressed.

Sha'th said: We demand international protection for the Palestinian people, because this is part of the Oslo agreement, and Israel cannot reject it. He noted that Israel has so far been procrastinating in accepting such protection.

Concluding, Sha'th stressed that the next Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will mainly focus on international protection for the Palestinian people so that the criminal massacre and the horrible killings will not recur.

Arabs Suspend Washington Peace Talks After Hebron Shooting

Syrian Envoy Announces Suspension

JN2802063294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Hisham Milhim dispatch from Washington]

[Excerpt] The Governments of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan have decided to suspend bilateral peace negotiations with Israel in Washington before the end of the last week of talks on Wednesday. This decision is to put on record their vehement denunciation of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and to express their solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Syrian delegation head Muwaffaq al-'Allaf communicated this united Arab stand to peace negotiations coordinator Dennis Ross on Sunday afternoon.

Al-'Allaf told Radio Monte Carlo: In light of the circumstances resulting from the massacre, we found that it is not logical or suitable to pursue the negotiations. We also want to express our solidarity with the Palestinian people after this barbaric attack.

The suspension of negotiations takes place three days before they were scheduled to end. [passage omitted]

Israeli Sources Regret Suspension

TA2802061394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] The peace negotiations in Washington have been broken off and will apparently not be resumed before April. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, the head of the Syrian delegation, informed U.S. peace coordinator Dennis Ross of the decision reached by the Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese delegations. He pointed out that the decision had been personally made by the representatives of the various Arab delegations.

Israeli sources expressed the assessment that this was an indication of the desire of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan not to exacerbate the tensions generated by the Hebron massacre.

Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to Washington told our correspondent Arye Golan that Israel was prepared to launch continuous negotiations with the Palestinians in Washington starting this Wednesday [2 March], as proposed by President Clinton; however, this was now up to the PLO.

Political sources in Jerusalem expressed regret at the break in the talks, noting that this was merely a temporary hiatus which did not mean that the peace process had been halted.

The resumption of the Security Council's debate on the Hebron massacre has been put off due to the PLO's demand to include Jerusalem in the resolution calling for guarantees for the security of the Palestinians in the territories. Israel is prepared to accept this formula but refuses to include Jerusalem in it. Israel has also rejected the PLO demand to include a clause on a temporary international presence in the territories.

Gad Ya'aqobi, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, said that the international presence stipulated in the Declaration of Principles signed between the PLO and Israel referred to foreign observers that would be deployed with the mutual consent of both parties during the Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip. The Security Council is not convening because of the disagreement over these two issues. For the time being, agreement has only been reached on issuing a condemnation of the Hebron massacre and a call for accelerated peace negotiations.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 28 February reports that "political sources in Jerusalem believe that the United States will take action to resume the peace talks after the Security Council issues its resolutions. Yesterday, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin received a letter from UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus- Ghali. The secretary general called on Israel to agree to an international or foreign presence in the territories as stipulated by the Declaration of Principles signed in Oslo, although that document mentions the issue from a different aspect. Butrus-Ghali justifies his position by saying that stationing an international presence in the territories would constitute a confidence building measure between Israel and the Palestinians. Officials in Jerusalem, however, have categorically rejected this demand. Jerusalem officials also clarified that no additional decisions would be taken beyond those made by the cabinet yesterday."]

Jordan's al-Hasan Announces Suspension

JN2802113094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, has stated that following the ugly Israeli massacre in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque during Friday's dawn prayers, the Arab parties participating in the current bilateral negotiations in Washington held intensive contacts with one another and with the heads of their delegations to the negotiations and decided not to attend the remaining meetings in these negotiations.

A senior PLO official said today that the peace talks with Israel have been suspended and no decision to resume them in Washington or elsewhere has been made. PLO Executive Committee member Samir Ghawshah said after a Palestinian leadership meeting last night that the Palestinian side has recalled all its negotiating teams. He added that, in his opinion, the talks have been suspended.

Another PLO official today said the PLO decided to send a special envoy to Washington within 24 hours for talks with the American officials on the terms for resuming the peace talks with Israel. He said the PLO agreed in principle to resume talks, but this does not mean they will be held next week.

Butrus-Ghali Expresses Concern Over Hebron Shooting

NC2502165294 Paris AFP in English 1636 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] United Nations, February 25 (AFP)—UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali sharply condemned the Hebron massacre of 53 Palestinians Friday and called on Israel to prevent Jewish settlers from committing other criminal acts.

Butrus-Ghali, in an official statement released here in New York, expressed deep concern over the attack in the West Bank town of Hebron and the effect it might have on the Middle East peace process.

He called for calm by all sides in the negotiations and the immediate implementation of the Declaration of Principles for Palestinian autonomy hammered out in Middle East peace talks.

Earlier, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) representative Nasir al-Qidwah said the Security Council will likely call an emergency meeting Friday on the Hebron massacre.

Asked whether the council would meet on Friday, al-Qidwah said, "yes, probably in the afternoon. I guess we will have it."

Asked what outcome he hoped to get from the meeting, he said "I prefer not to get into that at this stage."

The call for the emergency Security Council session came hours after one or more Jewish settlers shot dead 53 Palestinians and wounded 80 during dawn prayers at a Hebron mosque in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

PLO Official Demands Reopening Settlers' Issue

TA2602205594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Interview with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the PLO delegation in Washington, by Elimelekh Ram; place and date not given—recorded, in English]

[Text] ['Urayqat] What happened in Hebron meant to all participants that the issue of settlements will either make or break this peace process. So any negotiations, in my opinion, that doesn't have the settlements on the top of the agenda will be senseless negotiations.

[Ram] In other words, Mr. 'Urayqat, you suggest to open the DOP [Declaration of Principles] and the Cairo agreements.

['Urayqat] What I am saying is very clear. What I am saying is that the crimes, the massacres of Hebron have demonstrated to those in the Israeli Government who insisted to have the settlement issue delayed—it has proven them wrong. If they want peace, real peace, it means this issue must be on the agenda.

[Ram] Okay, Sir, so I repeat my question: You mean to open the agreement, the DOP and the Cairo agreement?

['Urayqat] Yes.

PLO Envoy: UNSC Action on Hebron Necessary

NC2702080894 Paris AFP in English 0426 GMT 27 Feb 94

[by Rene Slama]

[Excerpts] United Nations, Feb 26 (AFP)—Disagreement between the United States and the Palestinians blocked the adoption of a resolution Saturday condemning the massacre of at least 52 Palestinians worshiping at a West Bank mosque.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) representative at the United States, Nasir Al-Qudwah, indicated that talks scheduled for Washington this week could collapse if the UN Security Council [UNSC] did not adopt a resolution condemning the killings and if Israel did not take steps to protect Palestinians from Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

The United States, which is in constant contact with Israel, has agreed to go further than just condemning the assault but rejected any reference to Jerusalem as an occupied territory or offering international protection for Palestinians, a PLO representative said. [passage omitted]

"We believe that it is very unfortunate that the Council failed to fulfill its responsibility," said al-Qudwah, a nephew of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat. "We reached a deadlock."

Asked if the Mideast talks scheduled for this week were threatened by the failure to agree on resolution, al-Qudwah responded: "We appreciate the efforts of President Bill Clinton to save the peace process.

"But to resume the talks and (for) success to be achieved, certain measures should be taken by the Security Council as the representative of the international community and by the Israeli government."

The PLO required a "serious change in policy" from Israel, which should start disarming settlers, he said.

Also Saturday, UN Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali sent a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin proposing that the United Nations send observers to the occupied territories, a spokesman for the secretary general said.

Reply to PLO 'Questions' to Determine Fate of Talks

TA2702171494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the PLO has sent the Israeli Government a series of questions about matters of principle. Israel's replies to these queries would help the organization decide its position regarding the continuation of the peace negotiations. The list of questions was handed to Major General Dani Rothschild by Palestinian delegate Sa'ib 'Urayqat. The questions deal with the confiscation of the settlers' weapons, the evacuation of the settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip, and the stationing of an international force in the territories.

At today's cabinet session, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said that Israel could meet the Palestinian demands on certain issues; however, other demands, such as the stationing of an international force in the territories, would be rejected.

Official: Approximately Half of Accord Finalized

TA2602165194 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 25 Feb 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[Excerpt] This past week in Cairo, Yo'el Singer, the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser, and Nabil Sha'th, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the security committee talks, completed the formulation of approximately half of the overall agreement for Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and settled the serious dispute over the Palestinians' legislative powers. In Singer's opinion, the meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat and the signing of the agreement between Israel and the PLO could take place before 13 April 1994.

Nevertheless, in a special interview with DAVAR, Singer noted that Israel says that the mass release of prisoners is conditional on a general amnesty of collaborators. According to him, the PLO made a strategic decision to advance rapidly in all tracks of the talks. The talks in Cairo in the last two weeks have been very businesslike and good, Singer said. Issues which were previously settled only after arguments that lasted for days have recently been settled within half an hour, he said. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Holds Israel Responsible for Shooting

NC2702225594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2242 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—The Arab League Council has condemned the ugly Israeli crime against unarmed Palestinian worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron on the occupied West Bank in which scores of people were martyred and hundreds of others were wounded and has called it a terrorist action that expresses organized state terrorism.

In its emergency meeting this evening at the Arab League headquarters, the council held the Israeli occupation authorities responsible for this crime and those committed by the Israeli settlers. The council called on the Israeli authorities to disarm the Israeli settlers.

The Arab League Council decided to reaffirm its Resolution 5269, adopted in its extraordinary session on 11 and 12 January 1993, calling on the United Nations to find a suitable mechanism to implement the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention by detailing a UN force to provide protection for the Arab citizens in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

The council called on the cosponsors of the Madrid Conference—the United States and Russia—in view of their special responsibility for ensuring the success of the peace process to undertake a principal role in providing the necessary protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The council also called on the UN Security Council to send a UN committee to investigate this serious incident and adopt the necessary measures to enable the committee to carry out its mission.

The council also called on the Security Council, particularly the cosponsors of the Madrid Conference, to immediately implement the council resolutions regarding Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories as illegal and an obstacle to comprehensive and just peace, particularly Resolution 465 of 1980, which called for the dismantling of the existing settlements and suspending any plans for the establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem.

The Arab League Council decided to consider 15 Ramadan of every year a day to commemorate the martyrs of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre to remind the international community of the inhuman Israeli actions.

The council called on the Arab states to provide all forms of aid and support to the families of the Palestinian victims and martyrs.

The council decided to ask the Arab League secretary general to continue his contacts with all the international bodies to ensure the implementation of this decision and urge them to adopt whatever is needed to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The Arab League Council called on the cosponsors of the peace conference to work seriously to achieve peace by enabling the Palestinian people to secure their legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination, and establish their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Arab League Chief 'Strongly Condemns' Hebron Attack

NC2502121694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. `Ismat `Abd-al-Majid has strongly condemned the assault on worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn today in which dozens were killed and hundreds wounded.

Dr. `Abd-al-Majid said the Arab League is very gravely concerned about this sorrowful incident.

In a statement to MENA, `Abd-al-Majid said he issued instructions to Ambassador Mahmud Abu-al-Nasr, head of the Arab League Bureau in New York, to coordinate with representatives of the Islamic Conference Organization, the OAU, and the Arab countries at the United Nations to submit the issue to the Security Council to decide what to do about this assault and to draw the world's attention to it via the Security Council, the highest international body.

The Arab League secretary general added that this act proves again that the settlers flout security and public order in the occupied territories while the Israeli authorities overlook their crimes. He pointed out that this situation causes things to escalate dangerously and threatens the peace process.

Dr. `Abd-al-Majid said the Israeli Government must immediately adopt measures to protect the Palestinians from such hostile acts and that the world community must bear its responsibility and provide international protection for the Palestinians living under occupation. He remarked that this is necessary because Israel is unable to maintain order in these areas in line with international agreements and the Human Rights Charter.

`Abd-al-Majid stressed the importance of adopting measures to prevent a recurrence of these hostile actions.

Israel's 'Procrastination' 'Unacceptable'

NC2802105594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0950 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. `Ismat `Abd-al-Majid has described the resolutions adopted by the emergency meeting of the Arab League Council last night as all-encompassing and comprehensive, revealing a united Arab stance that is rallying to condemn last Friday's ugly massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in the occupied West Bank.

In statements today, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Arab League Council resolutions are a message from the Arab League to Israel and the international community, clarifying that prevarication, procrastination, and Israel's nonrespect for the dates agreed upon have become unacceptable in the Arab world.

He stressed that the Arab countries are seeking to achieve a comprehensive and just peace to create stability in the Middle East. He noted that peace is not only an Arab interest, but an Israeli one too. He said the Arabs want a just peace based on withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and based on recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid went on to say that the Hebron massacre again highlighted the Arab stance that demands Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, stressing that the Arab countries are not in a weak position, because justice is on their side.

He noted that the Palestinian intifadah activated the recent peace process and hastened the Madrid conference and the Washington peace talks.

The Arab League secretary general also stressed the importance of the Jerusalem issue. He said it has top priority in the negotiations and the Palestinian and Arab sides are determined to retrieve it. [passage omitted]

Arab League Official Blames Israel for Hebron Massacre

NC2702152794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Assistant Secretary General 'Adnan 'Imran has stated that the world reactions to the massacre of Palestinian worshipers in the Hebron Mosque on Friday are not enough. He pointed out that the world community has gotten used to Israeli massacres.

Ambassador 'Imran noted that this is not the first and will not be the last massacre unless real international deterrent measures are taken. He pointed out that the Israeli settlement policy defies the Geneva Conventions and the UN Security Council resolutions. He added that this policy was not made by settlers but by the Israeli governments, which set up these settlements, are responsible for arming the settlers to seize Arab territories, and permitted them to use their weapons at their personal discretion. This, he added, shows that the Israeli authorities are responsible for writing the scenario of the massacre.

GCC, Arab Red Crescent Condemn Hebron Killings

LD2602231194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2155 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Riyadh, 26 Feb, SPA—The General Secretariat of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] has strongly denounced the savage bloody massacre perpetrated yesterday [25 February] at dawn by Israeli settlers against Palestinian citizens while the latter were performing the dawn prayers in the al-Ibrahimi mosque in the Palestinian town of al-Khalil, and the result of this hideous crime—the martyrdom of scores of innocent citizens and the injuring of hundreds of others.

A statement issued by the general secretariat of the council today condemned the criminal aggression, and stressed that it expressed Israeli extremism and bigotry, and carelessness for the lives of Palestinian citizens. The statement urged the international community to bear its responsibilities in providing protection for the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories, stopping the crime and bloody slaughter committed against them, and blaming the Israeli Government alone for any results of this criminal aggression.

For its part, the General Secretariat of the organization of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross societies has condemned the regrettable incidents that took place yesterday in the al-Ibrahimi mosque in al-Khalil, and stressed that these criminal acts perpetrated by the Jewish settlers violated the freedom of the sacred places and of innocent citizens.

In a statement issued today, the general secretariat called for the disarming of the settlers so that such hideous crimes may not be repeated against the innocent sons of the Palestinian people, which is struggling to gain its legitimate rights.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Reacts to Massacre at Hebron Mosque

Insists on UN Resolution

NC2702065394 London MBC Television in Arabic 2100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by MBC Tunis correspondent Mufidah Hashani in Tunis on 26 February; recorded]

[Text] ['Arafat] The most important [word indistinct] is international protection for (?our people). We must see a solution for these settlements and the armed settlers, because they have proven to be time bombs liable to explode at any moment whether we pursue the negotiations or [words indistinct]. The situation may explode at any moment. They are time bombs.

[Hashani] What do you expect from the Security Council's meeting tonight?

['Arafat] We are in continuous contact with the U.S. Administration on this issue because we insist on a resolution from the Security Council, not just a condemnation of [words indistinct].

[Hashani] Where have the negotiations between you and the United States reached?

['Arafat] They are continuing.

[Hashani] Any idea about the resolution expected to be passed?

['Arafat, interrupting] [Words indistinct] but as I said, we are continuing our contacts with the U.S. Administration on this issue.

[Hashani] What about tomorrow's meeting with the Palestinian negotiators who were recalled by the PLO for a meeting in Tunis? Other than the settlements issue, can you clarify other topics of the meeting's agenda[]

['Arafat] I prefer not to talk too much and would rather like the deeds do the talking. There will be a complete and comprehensive assessment and afterward we will make a decision.

Accuses IDF of 'Full Involvement'

NC2502194394 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1847 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat at PLO headquarters in Tunis by Shadiyah Riyad in Cairo in the "Talking Newspaper" program—live]

[Text] [Riyad] Your Excellency, the Palestinians' security under the Israeli occupation is Israel's responsibility. Do you believe that Israel is incapable of providing security for the Palestinians or is it not interested in their security?

['Arafat] I would like to say something very important. There is full involvement by the Israeli Army in the crime that took place today, that massacre which was carried out in the Ibrahimi Mosque. The army had been an accomplice in many earlier incidents. When I say this I do not say it lightly. It is known that the Israelis have sequestered Sarah's Grotto, which was Abraham's wife's, and turned it into a synagogue. This was done inside the mosque. Therefore, there is constant guard at the entrances of the mosque and around it. That is why they cannot say that any settler could sneak in with his weapon. The settlers entered behind an army captain and under cover of the Israeli army. They committed their crime, which has resulted so far in 65 martyrs and 256 wounded people. The army covered the getaway of these criminals. It also opened fire on the people; six martyrs fell and about 22 persons were wounded as a result. The number of martyrs in Hebron has not been counted as yet. In addition, the army is staging confrontations in all areas; in Gaza, Ramallah, Qalandiyah, Bethlehem, Qalqilyah, and Nabulus, where dozens of people have been martyred or been wounded since morning. There is complicity between the army [pauses] it might not be in the army. But a considerable sector of the army command was accomplice to this crime, earlier crimes, and the crimes that are taking place throughout the country at present. I would like to remind you, Sister Shadiyah, that I clearly pointed a few weeks ago to the army's involvement in distributing and selling weapons in the territories. They think that by the time they withdraw, chaos will prevail among our people, our folk, and our strugglers. This tells us that there is an integrated plan which the Israeli Army is carrying out. Let people near and far realize the dimensions of this crime.

[Riyad] Mr. President, there is an uproar among the Palestinian population, some of whom call for suspending the negotiations because the atmosphere is not appropriate. Do you think that this ugly massacre will lead to the suspension of negotiations or will it dictate continuing and speeding up these negotiations?

['Arafat] No doubt, we must understand that the main objective of these criminals is to strike at the peace process. We are now studying all possibilities.

[Riyad] Does this require a revision of the concepts governing the peace process and does this development dictate new issues?

['Arafat] No doubt, it will have extremely negative effects on the entire peace process. I contacted all the international sides, the co-sponsors of the peace conference, the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and the EU members, all the European states, the nonaligned states, the Islamic states, the Arab states, the African states, and all our friends in the world. I also asked that an immediate and emergency session of the UN Security Council be convened. We demand international protection following the actions with the collusion of the Israeli army and the armed settlers as part of an integrated plan. Therefore, we urge all the honest people of our friends and all our Arab and Muslim brothers, all the peace-loving people, and all the freedom-loving people to immediately help us by putting an end to these massacres and to swiftly introduce international protection for our people inside our occupied territories.

[Riyad] Mr. President, this brings me to a question about your expectations concerning the reaction of the international community. If I rightly recall, in 1990 there was another massacre in the al-Aqasa mosque in which dozens were killed, but maybe not as many as those killed today. At that time, the matter was referred to the UN Security Council, which condemned Israel. The Palestinians then called for international security, but Israel refused and the international community could not enforce such protection. Do you think that this scenario will be repeated, or are things different now?

['Arafat] Everything has become exposed. As of today, the world, the world leaders, and the world officials should shoulder their international responsibilities, humanitarian responsibilities, political responsibilities, and moral responsibilities. They must give their word. Will they leave Israel and its army to carry out acts of belligerency against the Palestinian people, against our faithful, our worshipers, women, children, and people? Will they leave this belligerency without control? I say that the entire world must know that our people will not kneel down. This is the people of martyrs. We are all martyrs-in-waiting. People far and near must understand these words.

[Riyad] Thank you sir.

['Arafat] May God bless you.

[Riyad] Thank you very much.

['Arafat] Thank you.

Repeats Accusations of IDF 'Collusion'

LD2502204594 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1933 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Statement by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, following a meeting with Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in Carthage on 25 February—recorded]

[Text] This meeting with the president coincides with this grave and large-scale massacre against people praying in the holy al-Ibrahimi mosque in al-Khalil [Hebron] in our occupied land, which resulted in 65 martyrs and 256 injured. It was perpetrated by armed settlers in collusion with, and with the participation of, the army guard which was guarding this area. The latter had taken part in the opening of fire against our kinfolk in al-Khalil area [following the massacre] killing 8 martyrs and injuring 28. Clashes flared up in all our land, in Gaza, Nablus, Jenin, in Galilee, in Bethlehem, in Khan Yunis, in Rafah, in Qalandiyah, in Jerusalem. Even in Jerusalem, people performing the Friday prayers today were subjected to an attack by special units of the [Israeli] army resulting in between 60 to 65 injured.

I have put the president in the picture of all these matters in detail, and of the collusion between the armed settlers and some elements in the Israeli Army.

I would like to add also that we have called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council because we are now in need for an international force to protect our people, our kinfolk, our children and women, and the conspiracy has now become clear, aimed at all our people and all our kinfolk, and it clearly exposes the dangers caused by settlements and settlers. I want to say all these things, and I have coordinated with the president so that he may help us whether at the international, local, or UN level, or all levels. In my own name, I have thanked him for the noble feelings showed by Tunisia in this terrible loss. This is not surprising on the part of Tunisia, and its president, government and people.

Despite the large-scale nature and size of the tragedy concerning this massacre, our people, the people of martyrs, freemen and mujahidin, will bear it as it has borne before it many blows dealt to it by these dangerous elements.

At any rate, clearly what is meant is to deal a blow at the heart of the peace process, and the dimensions of this conspiracy have become clear. In this respect, I address myself to the two cosponsors of the peace conference who had signed with us the agreement last September in the White House, to all the international community and to the members of the Security Council, whether the permanent ones or the non-permanent ones, to take up their tasks and shoulder their responsibilities at all levels to face up to this serious development. Thank you.

Stresses 'Conspiracy' by Settlers, Army

LD2602135194 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1200 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Yasir 'Arafat has expressed his sadness on France-2 TV. He does not wish to express himself categorically on the continuation of negotiations. The interview was carried out exclusively by our special envoy to Tunis, Michel Montponte:

[Begin recording] [Montponte] It was in the middle of the night, as he usually does, that the PLO chairman received us in one of his several and discrete residences of Tunis. Looking clearly very hurt by the events of Hebron, his tone was grave and categorical; he looked more tired than usual:

['Arafat] This is not one man. I am speaking as an expert. No man can single-handedly kill 65 people and injure 256. No one can do that. There is no Rambo. There were more than 10.

[Montponte] Mr. Chairman, do you think that today's incidents signal the breakdown of the peace process with the Israelis?

['Arafat] The whole process has already lost credibility and even more following this massacre. This massacre is a conspiracy by the settlers and the Army.

[Montponte] Do you think violence will resume?

['Arafat] Definitely. This will backfire and nobody can imagine the extent.

[Montponte] Do you personally trust Israeli justice to understand and find out what really happened?

['Arafat] I prefer to wait and see. [end recording]

Expresses Need for International Protection

LD2602205994 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] [Announcer] Francois Mitterrand has written to Yitzhaq Rabin and Yasir 'Arafat. Bill Clinton has invited them to come to Washington again, but is not under any illusion for the time being. Yasir 'Arafat prefers to wait and see, as he told our correspondent in Tunis, Michel Montpontet:

[Begin recording 'Arafat in English with superimposed French translation; processed from the English] We are in need now of an international protection for our people. This is very important and the peace accord we have signed in Washington last September mentions an international presence, and the Israelis accepted that. Armed settlers are a real time bomb. We are asking the Israeli government to take measures, steps, and to take their responsibility, and to respect what they have signed. It is true that President Clinton offered us an invitation, but before that we would want to know under what umbrella. [end recording]

Sends Letter to EU President

NC2702141494 Paris AFP in English 1242 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Brussels, Feb 27 (AFP)—PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has sent a letter to the president of the European Union seeking urgent international measures to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories following the Hebron massacre.

"I believe that the Palestinian people should be afforded international protection as a matter of urgency until we are able to achieve security, stability and prosperity," 'Arafat told Greek President Andreas Papandreou, whose country currently heads the rotating EU Presidency, in his two-page letter dated Friday.

The letter was written shortly after the assassination of 52 Moslems by a Jewish settler who shot his victims as they were praying at a mosque in the town of Hebron.

"The massacre took place before the eyes and with the knowledge of the Israeli Army which has checkpoints and observation posts both at the entrances to the old town of Hebron and at the entrances to the mosque itself," 'Arafat told Papandreou.

He added that Jewish settlers opposed to the ongoing Israeli- Palestinian peace process must not be allowed to endanger that process "and undermine the foundations we wish to lay for a new period of rapprochement, good neighbourly relations and cooperation in Palestine and the Middle East."

He said that unless the controversial issue of Jewish settlements is resolved by the international community, there is little chance for peace.

"I am convinced that you will wish to make every effort to remove the source of the crisis, for the settlements are one of the most dangerous threats to the progress of the peace procedure, indeed a threat of actual failure."

Accepts Clinton Bid for Washington Talks

NC2702122194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1150 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, 27 Feb (MENA)—A responsible Palestinian source has stated that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has informed the United States that he agrees in principle to U.S. President Bill Clinton's proposal to send a Palestinian delegation to Washington to hold continuous sessions with a similar Israeli delegation to discuss starting to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

The same source said that when 'Arafat received U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia John McCarthy, he asked for some clarifications regarding the level of the negotiating delegations, the date for beginning the negotiations, the reason for moving them from Cairo to Washington, and the role the United States will play in these negotiations.

The Palestinian official added that 'Arafat informed the United States of the need for an Egyptian presence during the negotiations and that Egypt should play a clear role because it has been following the negotiations since they started. It has also been the host country, both in Cairo and Taba, ever since the Declaration of Principles was signed.

The Tunisian paper AS-SABAH today quoted informed Palestinian sources as saying that the Palestinian leadership is in the process of drafting a detailed memorandum to be handed to the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government. The memorandum contains several demands that need to be met before returning to the negotiating table. The memorandum contains the following:

1. All those connected with the Hebron massacre must be put on trial, particularly since the Palestinian leadership has confirmed information that the massacre was not an individual or isolated incident as Israel is trying to show, but was conducted with the participation and the collusion of leaders of their Army. According to the information, there were more that 20 assailants involved in the Hebron massacre, including soldiers and settlers.

2. That the settlers in the occupied territories be disarmed, security settlements be dismantled, and the settlements' extremist leaders expelled from the occupied territories and banned from returning there.

3. That the Qiryat Arba' settlement near Hebron, which is a bastion of Jewish extremists in the occupied territories, be dismantled.

4. That the issue of Jerusalem be put on the agenda of the talks and protection given to the unarmed Palestinian inhabitants of Jerusalem against the practices of the Israeli Army and settlers, in view of the Hebron massacre.

5. That Israel accept the entry of international troops into the cities, villages, and camps on the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, that are not subject to the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

6. That the timetable for the Israeli withdrawals from Gaza and Jericho be fully honored and the Palestinian security forces allowed to enter as soon as possible.

The same Palestinian sources pointed out that the majority among the Palestinian leaders insists on the need to suspend the negotiations if no "clear-cut and explicit" decision is made to prevent the settlers' excesses and crimes. The sources noted that the Palestinian leadership is also awaiting a clear-cut and explicit stand from the U.S. Administration that would reflect its credibility in cosponsoring the peace process.

Rejects Israeli Cabinet's Response

NC2702170894 Paris AFP in English 1652 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, Feb 27 (AFP)—PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat on Sunday [27 February] dismissed as inadequate the Israeli Government's response to the massacre of 52 Palestinians in Hebron.

Arafat told journalists that the cabinet decisions were "empty gestures and do not represent an adequate response" to Friday's slaughter.

The Israeli cabinet on Sunday gave the army the power to disarm hardline Jewish settlers, restrict their movements and place them in administrative detention.

It also agreed to form a committee of enquiry into the massacre, and to release up to 1,000 of some 10,000 jailed Palestinians as a gesture.

Arafat is to chair an emergency meeting of the PLO leadership here late Sunday to decide whether to resume peace talks with Israel.

President Bill Clinton wants Israel and the PLO to hold non-stop talks in Washington in a bid to seal agreement on the overdue launch of Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Israeli settlers denounced the government's response as going too far.

The Council of Jewish Communities in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza "rejected out of hand the proposals by irresponsible politicians ... to confiscate the weapons of Jews living (in the territories) and to punish Israeli citizens without a trial.

"Making people more vulnerable is no way to calm the situation," it said.

Calls Israeli Measures 'Hollow', 'Weak'

JN2702183694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1725 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Muhammad Kurayshan on 27 February, in Tunis—recorded]

[Text] [Kurayshan] How do you react to the measures taken by the Israeli Government against Jewish settlers in the occupied territories?

['Arafat] I regret to say that the decisions are hollow and weak compared to the enormity and seriousness of the crime and the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque. The Israeli Government barely scratched the surface of the problem. It failed to get to the bottom of the problem. It said nothing about the collusion of units from the Israeli military. There is proof that Israeli military units provided cover for the withdrawal of the band that committed the crime. They even opened fire on people and worshipers. Eight martyrs and more than 30 wounded fell to military gunfire. I am here quoting Israel radio.

I regret to say that the decisions are far too weak in comparison to the crime. We would have wished that the Israeli Government had taken deterrent action against these criminals. I am sorry to tell you that the Israeli Government is too (?weak) to do that. If this tells us anything, it is that the Israeli Government does not want to lay clear foundations for peace. From the moment we began the negotiations, they have been talking intermittently about security for the settlements and settlers. What about security for the Palestinians, our children, women, and masses? What about security for our Islamic and Christian holy places? Let's not forget the al- Aqsa Mosque massacre that was carried out by Israeli military and security forces a few years ago. And now a massacre committed by armed settlers in which Israeli military men were also involved.

Yesterday, we saw television pictures of Israeli military patrols [words indistinct] by patrols of armed settlers. I will tell them this: Who do you think you are fooling with these decisions? In any case, I never expected this government to come up with more than that.

[Kurayshan] But don't you think that disarming so-called extremists around Hebron and its vicinity may mark the first of more stringent measures in the future?

['Arafat] There are entire settlements run by these extremists. I would like to remind Rabin of his reference to political settlements run by political organizations. These are his words and not mine. Let him dismantle these political settlements if he is serious and does want peace. If the idea behind the decisions is to mollify angry world opinion, then they will not make a real difference. There is much more than that at stake. They must know that our blood is not water and that it will not be spilled in vain.

[Kurayshan] Mr. Chairman: Moreover, it was announced today that the occupied territories will be closed.

['Arafat, interrupting] Was it only today? What about yesterday? In other words, the punishment is not directed against the armed settlers but against the Palestinian people. Yesterday and today, confrontations erupted in Rafah, Khan Yunus, Gaza, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Jericho, Ramallah, Nabulus, Tulkarm, Janin, Qalqilyah; namely, throughout the country. The decision made by the Israeli army and government was to escalate the situation against the Palestinian people.

The Israelis say that the four people whom they want to arrest could not been arrested because they were holding a conference. Who are they deceiving? However, everyone should know that this will not undermine our people's determination, will, and resolve. We are a people who offered many martyrs. We are the guards of these holy lands and places.

As a saying by Prophet Muhammad goes: A group of my nation is still preserving the religion, confronting their enemy, and is not harmed by its enemies. This group will triumph with God's help. Some people asked the prophet: Where is and what is this group? The prophet answered: It is in Jerusalem and around it, and it will be in a state of mobilization until the day of judgment.

This is thus a divine message for this people, the guards of these holy places.

[Kurayshan] Mr. Chairman: There is also hesitation on the level of the UN Security Council about passing a resolution in this regard. How do you view this hesitation?

['Arafat] Regrettably, the U.S. Administration tried to prevent the convening of a session. However, we, along with the Arab, Islamic, and nonaligned groups as well as our friends in Europe and the world, insisted that a session should be held. We submitted a draft resolution which, first and foremost, provides for international protection for our people, masses, children, and women.

All should know that these settlements are illegal, according to several Security Council and UN resolutions. They are also time bombs and constitute not only obstacles to peace but also walls and mines against the peace process. I regret to say that we do not agree on the U.S. draft resolution, and that we insisted on the draft resolution submitted by the Arab group. There is also a French draft resolution, which is not a bad one. However, it is sad that the U.S. draft resolution did not mention the Ibrahimi Mosque by name. Instead, it mentioned the Ibrahimi Mosque by its Israeli name. This mosque was built during the Umayyad times in the seventh century.

[Kurayshan] Originally, it was decided that the issue of the settlements should be postponed until the final status of the occupied territory is discussed. Do you believe what has happened requires discussing this issue now before the final status is reached?

['Arafat] They say they want to take the weapons from the extremists. But there are settlements in their names. From Qiryat Arba' to Baruk [Goldstein] and so on, and so on. They know them. More than once, Rabin said there are political settlements which belong to political organizations. Let us see what measures he will take.

[Kurayshan] You invited the negotiating Palestinian teams and you will meet in Tunis...

['Arafat, interrupting] Here they are. Sa'ib ['Urayqat] has just arrived; my brother Nabil [Sha'th] has just arrived; my brother Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] arrived yesterday. Today the Palestinian leadership will hold a session to evaluate the situation.

[Kurayshan] What is expected in light of the Israeli Government's decisions?

['Arafat] I really do not like to give details before this issue is thrashed out in details and in all its aspects with the Palestinian leadership and in the presence of my brothers the delegations heads.

[Kurayshan] What is the chance of responding to U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation to go to Washington, in light of all that has happened.

['Arafat] We thank President Clinton because of this invitation, which shows his interest. However, before this, we want to know which way we are heading. Are we going to take pictures, as happened last September? Following this, Rabin said there are no sacred dates. When we spoke of an international presence, he said there are no sacred points? This in effect means that there is no sacred agreement. Before the Israeli Government answers us on all these things and before we know the results of the Security Council meeting, we cannot give answers. Let it be known, we will not allow the continued killing of our people. Our blood will not be in vain. We are all potential martyrs in defense of these sacred places. We are potential martyrs and pioneers for our Arab and Islamic nations.

[Kurayshan] In conclusion, how do you view the remainder of the march in the peace process, especially since you had been on the verge of tackling all the existing differences, as has been reported. Now after the massacre, and after it has become clear...

['Arafat, interrupting] It has become clear that in the Israeli Army there are officers, forces, and commanders who oppose the peace process. They are conniving with the settlers and are forming a bloc [preceding word in English] to carry out these massacres. Regrettably, this is what has transpired.

Explains Effect on Peace to Mubarak

NC2702111994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1040 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, 27 Feb (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has sent a written message to President Husni Mubarak on developments in the Palestinian stand after the massacre committed by the Israeli settlers in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron the day before yesterday.

Ambassador Ibrahim 'Allam, Egypt's ambassador in Tunis, stated that 'Arafat asked President Mubarak to keep up the great Egyptian stand which supports and backs the rights of the Palestinian people. He added that 'Arafat affirmed the importance of, and need for this stand at this stage after the massacre committed by the Israeli settlers in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque.

He said that 'Arafat also asked for Egypt's support for the PLO during the coming steps to remove the obstacles in the way of the peace talks and put an end to the violence and terrorism the settlers are practicing against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The Egyptian ambassador added that 'Arafat's message to Mubarak contained an explanation of the dimensions of the massacre, its effect on the peace process, and the PLO's stand from this massacre.

Discusses Bid for Washington Talks With Mubarak

LD2702224794 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 2200 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Brother Abu Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has had a telephone conversation late this evening with the Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, during which they examined in length the U.S. President's invitation to the Palestinian and the Israeli sides to hold urgent talks in Washington. They also discussed the current emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to examine the Israeli horrible massacre carried out by Israeli settlers against Palestinian worshippers in the Ibrahimi shrine, and the need to take a decision on the provision of international protection to the Palestinian people as well as for the armed settlers. [passage omitted]

Al-Tibi Reports PLO Criticism of Cabinet Decisions

TA2702133794 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1300 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Eldad Beck]

[Text] The PLO leadership in Tunis has already been apprised of today's cabinet session. The PLO declared that the cabinet's decisions were insufficient, failed to meet the Palestinians' minimum demands, and disappointing. We spoke with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, a short while ago. Dr. al-Tibi commented on the steps slated to be taken against the Kakh activists, including their disarmament. Al-Tibi said we are not dealing with a small group of people and asserted that a large number of settlers should be disarmed. Ahmad al-Tibi called for an immediate solution to the problem of the Jewish settlements, especially those located in the heart of Arab population centers. Al-Tibi said: A new era has ensued in the wake of the massacre in Hebron and the Israeli Government decisions do not meet its demands. In short, Ahmad al-Tibi described today's cabinet decisions as disappointing.

'Arafat Aide on Effect of Massacre on Peace Talks

TA2502152994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1305 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with Jibril al-Rajub, Yasir 'Arafat's aide, in Tunis, by Gid'on Zelinger and Moti Amir, recorded 'earlier today'; place not given]

[Text] [Al-Rajub] What did 'Arafat mean? He meant that the killing of innocent people—as was the case in Hebron today—must stop.

[Zelinger] What is the chairman's mood? Did you meet him this morning?

[Al-Rajub] I was the first one who received the information about the Hebron incident, and I was the one who called and woke 'Arafat up. As you know, he was sleeping at the time. I gave him details about the incident. He was indeed very agitated.

[Zelinger] One of the leaders of the rejectionist front organizations—those who oppose 'Arafat and the peace process—suggested that 'Arafat use his personal revolver and commit suicide. He said that 'Arafat and his peace process are a failure.

[Al-Rajub] Look, nobody will teach us how to behave in such situations. I think that the lunatic and insane person who perpetrated the murder in Hebron today killed all the possibilities of pursuing the peace process.

[Zelinger] Is it that bad?

[Al-Rajub] Yes, this is what I believe. But those who oppose us can say whatever they want. They won't teach 'Arafat and Fatah how to behave in such situations.

[Amir] Jibril al-Rajub, you are 'Arafat's adviser for West Bank affairs and are familiar with the Hebron events. You know that only one individual was responsible for this criminal attack. Do you believe that this tragic and criminal incident was the last nail in the Oslo agreement's coffin, and is this what you advised 'Arafat?

[Al-Rajub] This is my personal opinion. I do not believe this was the work of one person. I do not think he could have perpetrated the attack without the support of somebody from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] or the Israeli security services.

[Zelinger] I want to understand, Mr. al-Rajub, are you recommending that 'Arafat terminate—or at least freeze—the peace process?

[Al-Rajub] I am expressing my opinion as a fighter and a Palestinian. This is my personal opinion.

[Zelinger] So you are speaking to us as a fighter and not as a man of peace?

[Al-Rajub] I am a Palestinian citizen and fighter, as you know. I think that the man who shot the worshipers today killed all the possibilities for continuing the peace process in the region.

[Zelinger] I want to understand you better; do you believe that the current peace process, based on the Oslo understandings, has no chances of success?

[Al-Rajub] I do not think that any progress has been made. There was talk of progress, but the agreement should have been implemented months ago, but nothing was done yet.

[Zelinger] Is this your personal opinion? We heard a similar opinion expressed by several opposition members in the territories. What does 'Arafat think?

[Al-Rajub] The PLO leadership is currently meeting. I believe 'Arafat is under great stress. I think that it is still impossible to understand or speak about what happened in Hebron today.

[Zelinger] One thing is certain, though. The position you are expressing is playing into the hands of all those who oppose the peace process, whether Jews or Arabs.

[Al-Rajub] Look, I also cannot understand how after this incident people were still killed by the IDF....[several words indistinct] Our blood is also sacred.

[Zelinger] Will you resign if 'Arafat pursues the peace process?

[Al-Rajub] I will draw my own conclusions.

[Amir] Jibril al-Rajub, you have heard the torrent of denunciations coming from the direction of the Israeli president, prime minister, and ministers. All of them referred to it as a tragic and despicable act perpetrated by one person. The Israeli supporters of the peace process are anxiously following this process and we are greatly interested in what the Palestinians think. You—'Arafat's aide—are saying that this act terminated the entire peace process. Will Yasir 'Arafat pursue the peace process?

[Al-Rajub] I am not the chairman's spokesman. You must realize, however, that there is a difference between denouncing such attacks and between taking steps to prevent their recurrence. I do not think this was the first such incident, but it is extremely grave and I believe we must draw the appropriate conclusions as a nation and an organization. Two months ago we started talking about peace and coexistence, but so far nothing has moved in that direction.

[Zelinger] You presented yourself both as 'Arafat's aide and a fighter. What do you have to say today to your fighters in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank—the Fatah Hawks? Will they receive new instructions now?

[Al-Rajub] It is possible that they will receive new instructions. If real means to protect the Palestinian citizens are not implemented I think we will have to issue new orders. I say this with regret.

[Amir] Does this mean breaking the agreement on a cessation to Fatah hostile acts and resuming the attacks?

[Al-Rajub] I am afraid that unless real measures are not taken to protect the Palestinian citizens there will be new orders.

[Zelinger] Is it possible that you are speaking now in a state of extreme agitation and that you will change your mind in the next few days?

[Al-Rajub] I cannot say so now, but let's wait and see.

[Zelinger] I want to thank you, Jibril al-Rajub—one of the most senior aides of 'Arafat in Tunis. I understand you want to add something before we take our leave of you.

[Al-Rajub] I only wanted to tell you that for us war is not an end, but only a means of achieving peace and security for our people. In this case I do not think it is the right way [sentence as heard].

'Arafat Aide: Talks To Continue; U.S. 'Responsible'

NC2502170094 Paris AFP in English 1632 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, Feb 25 (AFP)—PLO-Israeli negotiations to launch autonomy in the occupied territories will continue despite Friday's [25 February] massacre of more than 50 Palestinians at a Hebron mosque, an aide to chief Yasir 'Arafat said here.

Sakhr Habash, a member of the central committee of Arafat's Fatah movement, ruled out a suspension of the autonomy talks. "On the contrary, these acts show that peace is needed urgently."

Under the September 13 autonomy accord with the PLO, Israel was to have begun withdrawing troops from the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip about three months ago but negotiations have snagged on security issues.

Habash said there was a risk of reprisals from Palestinians in the occupied territories over the massacre at the mosque in Hebron, the West Bank. Hardline groups opposed to the peace talks have vowed to carry out revenge attacks.

Habash said the United States was mainly responsible for the massacre, adding that the gunman, Baruch Goldestein, was of American origin and a product of racist US-Jewish groups.

"The United States must respond to these psychopathic groups ... because their interests are against peace," Habash said.

Habash also laid the blame on the United Nations for failing to give international protection to Palestinians in the territories.

PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat called for "international protection" for the Palestinians in the territories. His envoy at the UN was hopeful that the Security Council would hold an emergency meeting to discuss the massacre later Friday.

The PLO also declared three days of mourning and a general strike in the occupied territories after the massacre of more than 40 Palestinians in the West Bank town of Hebron.

The PLO denounced the shooting as "criminal slaughter" and said the Israeli government was responsible, a PLO statement said earlier.

The international community, including the co-sponsors of the peace process Russia and the United States, should act to "put an end to such massacres."

Official PLO spokesman Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said between 20 to 30 Jewish settlers led by an Israeli army captain carried out the massacre.

'Abd-Rabbuh rejected Israel's "lying version" which said a lone gunman, Goldestein, shot dead 53 Palestinians at the West Bank mosque during dawn prayers.

"The PLO blames the Israeli government and its army for this crime," 'Abd-Rabbuh said at a press conference here.

'Aziz al-Hashmami, aged 40, told AFP he was inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs when the shooting started and said that "four to five" gunmen had opened fire as the Palestinian knelt in prayer.

'Abd-Rabbuh said Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin telephoned PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat to apologise for the attack.

'Arafat Aides Say Majority Favors Continuing Talks

TA2602192494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Most of Yasir 'Arafat's aides believe the peace process must be pursued, because halting the process would be tantamount to giving a prize to the insane murderer who acted in Hebron. This was said this evening by a senior source in the PLO leadership to our correspondent Moti Amir. He also said that tonight or tomorrow morning it will become clear whether the peace process will continue in its present format in Washington. The source emphasized Yasir 'Arafat is facing severe pressures by various PLO factions which are opposed to the continuation of the peace process, and is continuing his consultations in Tunis.

Ghawshaw on Recall of Negotiators, Clinton Proposal

NC2602094394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0915 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, 26 Feb (MENA)—The Palestinian leadership has decided to recall the Palestinian delegations to the negotiations with Israel in Washington, Paris, Cairo, and Taba to discuss the Palestinian position in the wake of the massacre perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the plaza of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn yesterday.

PLO Executive Committee Member Samir Ghawshah told a MENA correspondent in Tunis that at its meeting last night, the Palestinian leadership also requested an urgent Arab League meeting to discuss the massacre and take the necessary measures. The PLO asked its Arab League representative to present the request.

The PLO will also follow up efforts to convene an urgent UN Security Council meeting to adopt a positive stance on the events.

Ghawshah said the Palestinian leadership had decided to call the PLO Executive Committee into a full urgent meeting in Tunis to follow developments.

On the Palestinian leadership's position on U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation for the PLO and Israel to send delegations to Washington to hold prompt talks to advance the peace process, Dr. Samir Ghawshah said the Palestinian leadership has not yet determined its position on the invitation. He added: The purpose of the talks, the level of attendance, and the date must be known. So far, the PLO has received no details about the call.

Dr. Ghawshah denied reports that President Clinton had invited 'Arafat for a meeting with Rabin in Washington.

He said the Palestinian leadership will follow the results of the massacre on all levels, especially the developments in the occupied territories.

He added: We are awaiting the decisions Israel is going to make regarding the massacre, and we will determine our position accordingly. We want to know whether Rabin wants to achieve peace and security or to keep the territory and sponsor the settlers.

Ghawshah said the recall of the Palestinian negotiators is in preparation for the adoption of a clear position on the negotiations—suspending them, withdrawing from them, or boycotting them.

He said the situation is very serious in the occupied territories. We are discussing all aspects of the issue and will make the decision that preserves our people, he said.

Ghawshah stressed that the peace process is in a crisis after the massacre, which showed the world that it is the Palestinians, not the Israeli settlers, who need security.

Executive Committee Says U.S. Initiative 'Formal'

JN2802065694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] The decision to suspend the Arab-Israeli negotiations was described on the Palestinian level as being good news and the beginning of collective Arab action.

This was said by Samir Ghawshah who was speaking in Tunis at the end of the first meeting of the PLO Executive Committee in the presence of the Palestinian negotiating teams.

These meetings seek to define the stand toward the U.S. initiative for resuming the negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians in Washington. The PLO Executive Committee listened to a report by Palestinian delegation head Sa'ib 'Uraqyqat on the contacts with Washington. In light of this report, the Executive Committee viewed the U.S. initiative as a formal one and devoid of any content. The PLO Executive Committee then wondered about the reason for moving the negotiations to Washington and the representation level of the delegations. It stressed that negotiations are not the Palestinians' destiny and that the Palestinian people are pursuing the intifadah in the occupied territories, as Samir Ghawshah said. Ghawshah also emphasized the PLO Executive committee's rejection of the measures adopted by the Israeli cabinet yesterday because they are insufficient and do not meet even the minimum Palestinian demands.

PLO Rejects Israeli Government Decisions

NC2802100694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0944 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, 28 Feb (MENA)—The PLO Executive Committee has announced that it rejects the decisions the Israeli Government adopted last night on handling the situation in the occupied territories following the massacre committed at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron on Friday [25 February].

PLO Executive Committee Member Dr. Samir Ghawshah told a MENA correspondent in Tunis that at a meeting last night, the committee emphasized its rejection of the Israeli response to the demands sent by the PLO after the massacre. The demands were to disarm settlers, remove settlements, and provide protection for the Palestinians.

Ghawshah remarked that the decisions the PLO received after the Israeli Cabinet meeting yesterday were bad, not in proportion with the nature of the massacre, contained nothing new, and failed to provide solutions.

He added that the decisions indicate that Rabin's government is maintaining the policy of hegemony, intransigence, stalling for time, and failing to provide any solutions or even give a chance to efforts to deal with what happened. He said the Israelis proposed disarming a limited, specific number of individual settlers. But they refused to provide international protection for the Palestinian citizens under occupation. He explained that this means maintaining the settlements as an armed force in violation of the law and agreements. He stressed that the Palestinians cannot accept the existence of an irregular armed force when they take charge of security in Gaza and Jericho.

Ghawshah added that the Executive Committee also discussed the American proposal to hold urgent negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides in Washington. He pointed out that there is a general feeling within the committee that changing the venue of the talks will be useless if the same lists of negotiators are maintained, if the United States does not play a basic role as a partner and sponsor of the peace process, if pressure is not put on Israel to honor its commitments, and if the essence of these negotiations remains the same.

He explained that the U.S. proposal, which the PLO approved in principle, raises many questions on its ultimate goal: Does it really aim to boost the peace process or just to contain the situation resulting from the massacre? He pointed out that the American response to these questions and the U.S. proposals involve no real change in the peace process in terms of its essence and form or in terms of the U.S. bias toward Israel.

Ghawshah noted that no final decision has been made on participation in the Washington talks or on the date for this participation. He added that this issue is still being discussed.

The Palestinian official added that the committee will resume its meetings tonight with the participation of the heads of the negotiating teams to follow up on the decisions the UN Security Council will adopt. He remarked that these decisions will reflect the real stance of the Council members on the peace process, particularly the stance of the United States.

Ghawshah praised the resolutions adopted last night by the Arab League Council, saying they constitute a real starting point and an excellent step toward restoring Arab solidarity and supporting the lawful rights of the Palestinian people.

He affirmed that the decision in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan to suspend talks with the Israeli side in Washington in protest of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre shows that coordination and solidarity have returned and that the pan-Arab common interest and national security take priority over everything else.

PLO To Send Special Envoy to Washington

LD2802105694 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Excerpt] The PLO has decided today to send a special envoy to Washington to hold talks with U.S. officials on the conditions required to resume the peace talks with Israel in the aftermath of the al-Haram al-Ibrahimi massacre in Hebron last Friday. [passage omitted]

Sources Report Efforts Toward Rabin-'Arafat Meeting

TA2802075894 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 28 Feb 94 p 7

[Report from Tunis by Orli Katz-Arulay]

[Excerpts] Despite PLO leaders' declarations that "there will be no talks with Israel until it reviews its stands," efforts are being made to arrange an 'Arafat-Rabin meeting in Washington tomorrow. This was learned last night from unofficial sources in Tunis.

Beginning at 1700 yesterday, the bureaus of Rabin and 'Arafat exchanged messages containing the two sides' questions and answers. One of the central issues addressed in the messages was the number of detainees the PLO wanted to see released at once, compared with the cabinet decision yesterday to release only 800.

Apparently the exchange of messages will be continued only following the PLO leaders' meeting with Yasir 'Arafat at his Tunis headquarters tonight. The fate of the Rabin-'Arafat encounter will be also decided after the PLO meeting. [passage omitted]

Yesterday 'Arafat convened the nucleus of the PLO leadership to decide on future steps with regard to the peace negotiations. The PLO top echelons demand that the following terms be met:

—All Palestinian prisoners incarcerated in Israel are to be released at once, and the deportees are to be permitted to return.

—The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will begin withdrawing at once from Gaza and Jericho, and the vacuum will be filled by armed Palestinian policemen.

—The negotiations will address the settlement issue.

—Armed settlers will be banished from the area, and weapon stockpiles will be removed from the settlements.

Until all this happens, the PLO leadership wants an international force to enter the territories to protect the Palestinians. Senior PLO officials announced yesterday that they will resign if 'Arafat returns to the negotiations with Israel before the new PLO terms are met. [passage omitted]

'Abd-Rabbuh Comments on Hebron Attack, Talks

Settlements Must Be Removed

JN2502153194 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department, by Salah Salamah in the studio on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Salamah] The Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron has shocked the occupied territory and alerted all Palestinian forces in and outside the occupied territory. What is the latest information about the number of casualties?

['Abd-Rabbuh] So far, more than 60 Palestinian martyrs have fallen in Hebron and more than 270 Palestinians have been injured. The Israeli Army is participating with the settlers in the killing operations and in collective terrorism against the Palestinian people in steadfast Hebron. Clearly, this crime was well-planned.

[Salamah] In fact, some say the massacre is the work of one man, but other reports say it was an organized massacre. What information do you have about this?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Such a great number of martyrs and wounded cannot have fallen as a result of one man's work. A great number of settlers entered the Ibrahimi Mosque. They were armed and they entered under the eyes of the Israeli Army which, has strict security measures in place at all entrances to the Ibrahimi Mosque. These settlers opened fire on the worshipers while they were prostrated during dawn prayers. Therefore, all indications are that the operation was a large-scale one aimed at creating large-scale terror and fear. Palestinians in all areas are now confronting this crime and its perpetrators with all their resources. These murderers and criminals must be confronted with all our resources.

[Salamah] Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, in your opinion, will this pogrom affect the ongoing negotiations between Israel and the PLO?

['Abd-Rabbuh] It is clear now that the presence of the settlers and settlements in the heart of Palestinian territory is a time bomb that explodes every now and then to kill more people. Therefore, it is clear that no actual peace, either in a provisional or in a final form, will be achieved while the settlements are in existence.

[Salamah] Does this mean that during its current negotiations with Israel, the PLO will present the problem of the settlements that will remain in the Gaza Strip after the Israeli withdrawal?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Not just the issue of the settlements in the Gaza Strip.

[Salamah] I mean at this particular stage, Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh.

['Abd-Rabbuh] Yes, I am talking about this stage. All the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are an obstacles on the path of any arrangements to make peace. Therefore, the existence of the settlements is the point at issue now. No actual peace will be accepted with the presence of the settlers and these murderous gangs, who will destroy not only the peace process but the way of life of the Palestinian people. These have always been their aims. It has proven to be the same today.

[Salamah] Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh, what possible measures might the PLO take to face the possibility of similar massacres in the occupied territories?

['Abd-Rabbuh] As I have said, there is the issue of the existence of settlers. We must confront this existence by all means and resources. The issue of ending the existence of the settlements must be at the forefront of the issues that will be considered with the aim of realizing steps toward a just and real peace. Moreover, we have presented this urgent issue to the UN Security Council to take urgent measures so the UN Security Council will reiterate that the existence of the settlements is illegitimate and that they must be removed from occupied Palestinian territory, and also to provide international protection for the Palestinian people. Within this framework, we appeal to all the forces that wish to see peace, and to the Arab and Islamic worlds, to shoulder real responsibility along side of the Palestinian people in these difficult circumstances.

I repeat here that the Palestinian people will know how to confront this massacre. Those who committed it will pay a real price in exchange for every drop of Palestinian blood.

[Salamah] Thank, You, 'Abd-Rabbuh.

['Abd-Rabbuh] Thank You.

Rejects Israeli Version of Massacre

NC2502153094 Paris AFP in English 1513 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, Feb 25 (AFP)—Between 20 to 30 Jewish settlers led by an Israeli army captain carried out Friday's [25 February] massacre at the Hebron mosque, official PLO spokesman Yasir 'Abd-al-Rabbuh said.

'Abd-al-Rabbuh rejected Israel's "lying version" which said a lone gunman, Baruk Goldstein, shot dead 53 Palestinians at the West Bank mosque during dawn prayers.

"The PLO blames the Israeli government and its army for this crime," 'Abd-al-Rabbuh said at a press conference here.

'Aziz al-Hashmami, aged 40, told AFP he was inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs when the shooting started and said that "four to five" gunmen had opened fire as the Palestinian knelt in prayer.

'Abd-al-Rabbuh said Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin telephoned PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat to apologise for the attack.

The PLO declared three days of mourning and a general strike in the occupied territories after the massacre of more than 40 Palestinians in the West Bank town of Hebron.

The PLO denounced the shooting as "criminal slaughter" and said the Israeli government was responsible, a PLO statement said earlier.

The international community, including the co-sponsors of the peace process Russia and the United States, should act to "put an end to such massacres."

It repeated PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat's call for "international protection" for the Palestinians in the territories.

The PLO is currently trying to clinch a deal with Israel on launching Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Accuses Israeli Army of 'Collusion'

JN2502180794 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Report by Muhammad Kurayshan from Tunis]

[Text] It seems that the PLO leadership wants now to start off again from the Hebron mosque massacre to strongly raise the question of settlers and settlements in the occupied territories once and for all.

Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member, today urged the Israeli Government to disarm the gangs of settlers. At a news conference in Tunis, 'Abd-Rabbuh said the presence of the settlers contradicts the course of peace as a whole. He added:

[Begin 'Abd-Rabbuh recording] The first step is to disarm those gangs. Without this, there will be no guarantee of making any achievement on the road of peace. Today's crime shows that the settlers in the occupied territories represent a time bomb that could explode at any moment and threaten the peace process and thwart any steps for peace. This makes it necessary to discuss the entire question of the presence of the settlers. It is impossible to reconcile gangs of killers and peace. [end recording]

'Abd-Rabbuh, who cast doubt on the Israeli version of the incident as a whole and deemed it a sort of connivance with the criminals, said the operation was carried out by a group made up of 20 to 30 settlers. He accused several senior Israeli Army officers of collusion to facilitate the killing of Palestinians.

The Palestinian official said the Palestinian leadership's decision regarding the continuation of the peace process as a whole is linked to several factors.

[Begin 'Abd-Rabbuh recording] We are waiting for specific measures from the Security Council to ensure international protection of Palestinian citizens. Second, we will wait for a resolution by the Security Council asserting that the presence of settlers and settlements is illegal and that the settlements should be removed. Third, the Israeli Government should take measures, the minimum of which, and the first step, is to disarm the gangs of settlers. In light of these factors, we will spell out our position in the coming phase. [end recording]

The PLO is still engaged in a flurry of activity to ensure a successful course of action by the Security Council.

Demands Security Council Session

NC2502201194 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department, by MBC Tunis correspondent Mufidah al-Hashani in Tunis on 25 February—live or recorded]

[Text] [Al-Hashani] What is this massacre's practical impact on the peace process and the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, specifically on the PLO's stance vis-a-vis these negotiations?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Actually, there will be a great impact because the first thing we now want from the world and from the Israeli side is not just words of denunciation and condemnation. We are waiting for two urgent measures: the first is a Security Council meeting and the adoption of measures stressing the illegality of the construction and presence of settlements on Palestinian land. The second is the immediate disarming of the settlers because these criminal gangs—gangs of murderers—represent a time bomb threatening and undermining any steps toward peace.

[Al-Hashani] Has the PLO received response from any Western countries to holding a Security Council session?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Some preliminary responses have been received by noon today and we expect some more...

[Al-Hashani, interrupting] Were they positive?

['Abd-Rabbuh] Some were positive and we are waiting for other responses.

Calls Israeli Decisions "Insult"

JN2802143294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1228 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Interview with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, chief of the PLO Information Department, by Faridah al-Shuhaibi; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-Rabbuh] The Palestinian leadership held a meeting last night to discuss the results of the massacre in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque. The Palestinian leadership believes that the decisions made by the Israeli Government do not meet the minimum requirements under these circumstances for the resumption of the talks. These decisions are an insult to the blood of the Palestinian martyrs and encourage the settlers and their gangs to continue their hostile acts against the Palestinian people, as well as their daily violations and crimes. This stand has been communicated to all concerned parties. We do not believe that the talks can be held while this serious and explosive situation is being ignored. This situation is caused by the settlers' acts and crimes in the Palestinian territory. The Israeli Government should put an end to the role of the settlers' and their activities. They also should put an end to the presence of a number of settlements in Gaza and the West Bank, particularly in Hebron—where Qiryat Arba' represents a hotbed of terrorist and criminal activities against the Palestinian masses.

[Al-Shuhaibi] Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said today that the Palestinians do not have any option other than that of returning to the negotiations with Israel. He added that the Israeli Government has taken firm measures to avert violence, assassinations, and attempts to wreck the peace process, although the entire world has seen footage of the settlers attending Goldstein's funeral ceremony, in which he was deemed a hero and a martyr.

['Abd-Rabbuh] The real option before us and before all those who want to achieve peace is to end the role of settlers in the Palestinian territories. We cannot conceive of a peace agreement at a time when there is an additional army of terrorists and killers engaged in the perpetration of the most heinous crimes on the Palestinian territories, and enjoying the official support and protection of the Israeli Government. The Palestinian leadership is continuing its contacts and work in this regard. At present, we are working to ensure the passage of a UN Security Council resolution providing for international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Such a resolution must also condemn the settlers' activities, and deem their presence illegal as established by previous resolutions issued by the UN Security Council. These demands currently constitute the required guarantee for reaching a peace agreement, and indeed, for implementing the peace agreement on the ground. Consequently, the option raised at present is that of providing the requirements of true peace, the requirements that would help achieve such peace. Broad sectors of the world community are aware that it is impossible to achieve coexistence, and to create circumstances conducive to peace as long as settlements exist and as long as the time bomb called settlers and their armed groups remain.

[Al-Shuhashi] Does this mean that the choice will also be a diplomatic one? Peres said your only option is to resume the negotiations, and you are saying that the other option is to mobilize world public opinion or to contact the world following this massacre to support the Palestinians. What about the U.S. stand?

['Abd-Rabbuh] In the next two days, we will dispatch an envoy to Washington to discuss all these matters with the U.S. Administration. The issue is not about resuming talks just to show that the peace process is continuing. What is required is to link the resumption of talks with effective measures to stop this cancer, because the presence of settlers undermines peace opportunities. Both issues—the settlements and the resumption and success of the talks—have become intertwined.

The option is not only a diplomatic one. In order to protect themselves—and given the protection provided by the Israeli occupation forces to the settlements' activities and role—the Palestinians now have the right to carry weapons to defend themselves. Within this context, we call for a large-scale Arab and friendly campaign to support the Palestinian people in the occupied territory, particularly since the Israeli Government's decisions, which include some individual and limited measures against a few number of the settlers just to throw dust in the eyes, also include measures to maintain the siege and collective punishment against all the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory. This means the continuation of the starvation war and comprehensive terrorism. The victims are punished collectively, individual or light measures are being taken against some criminals only to avoid crisis and strong reactions by world public opinion.

[Al-Shuhashi] Has the Palestinian leadership accepted President Clinton's invitation to resume the talks with Israel next week, as has been reported?

['Abd-Rabbuh] I have said that we will send an envoy to Washington to explain our stand, a second envoy to Moscow, and a third to some European countries to explain that there is more to the issue than resuming the talks. The important issue is that it is impossible to ensure the success of the talks when there is a time bomb jeopardizing them—the presence of settlers, their daily acts of sabotage, and the threat they pose to the lives of Palestinians.

[Al-Shuhashi] Thank you, Mr. Yasir.

['Abd-Rabbuh] Thank you.

Al-Nashashibi Urges Moving to 'Final Status' Talks

JN2602115794 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Capitals, 26 Feb (SANA)—Denunciation and condemnation of the unprecedented ugly crime and bestial massacre, in which scores of believers were martyred or wounded at the hands of the Zionists in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque yesterday, are continuing. [passage omitted]

PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi condemned the ugly massacre perpetrated by the Zionist settlers in collusion with the occupation forces. Reached by telephone today, al-Nashashibi told SANA that the massacre crowns the arbitrary measures being practiced by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinian Arab people to prevent them from regaining their full national rights.

Al-Nashashibi called for stopping the PLO's negotiations with Israel and for moving immediately to negotiations on the comprehensive and final status on the basis of the Israeli forces' withdrawal from all the occupied territories in accordance with the resolutions of the international legitimacy which can secure the Palestinian Arab people's rights and achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. [passage omitted]

Al-Husayni Interviewed on Future of Peace Talks

Talks Should Focus on Final Settlement

TA2502190094 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Fayiz 'Umar in Jerusalem on 25 February—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Husayni] What happened, in fact, proves the gravity of the situation and that the presence of the Israeli Army or settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories is no longer relevant under any circumstances. What is happening now is a final destruction of the peace process.

['Umar] As national institutions in the area, what sort of measures or decisions will you be adopting in the aftermath of this incident?

[Al-Husayni] First of all, we summoned the foreign consuls in Jerusalem to appraise them of the gravity of the situation and convey to them our position and demands, which began with disarming the settlers and providing international protection for the Palestinians. The Israeli Army is unable to do so. Apparently, it has a specific mission, which is only directed against the Palestinians and provides adequate cover to the settlers to do whatever they want. Hence, first of all we demand the disarming of the settlers; second, international protection; and third, other measures must follow to ensure Israeli withdrawal on the basis that no settlements will remain on Palestinian soil.

['Umar] Do I understand from your remarks that you support Mr. 'Arafat's statement this morning, which he made after the incident?

[Al-Husayni] In fact, until now we have not received any details of this statement, but I believe that as far as the current peace process is concerned, modifications must be introduced in the agreements that have been reached. We have tried as much as possible to take a step forward, although not complete a one, in order to advance the peace process. However, what has happened today proves to us that such a step will not be fruitful. Now, we want the talks to deal with a final solution. We do not believe there is need for an interim stage, because an interim stage will lead to further bloodshed and losses.

Says Settlements 'Time Bomb'

NC2802072894 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, in Jerusalem, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Two days after the dreadful massacre committed against Palestinian citizens in the Ibrahimi Mosque, what is the situation in the occupied Arab territories?

[Al-Husayni] The Palestinians in Hebron, who were the victims of that massacre, are now living under a strict curfew; anyone who walks on the street is fired upon. The curfew is imposed on all other Palestinian towns: Bayt Sahur, Bayt Jala, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarm, Qalqiliyah, and all the Palestinian towns and villages. People are moving freely in Qiryat Arba', the center where the crime was planned. Even the closure decision that the Israelis claim to have made is not in force; the area is not closed and the settlers are free to leave the settlement and return to it from Hebron and elsewhere. This shows the nature of the Israeli approach, which can only produce other such practices by the settlers—practices that the Israeli army completes, either by encouraging them or by participating in them.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] There is more than one question about the implications of that criminal act. Was there really collusion between the Israeli Government or the Israeli army and the settlers?

[Al-Husayni] Israel's past approach created a particular Israeli mentality. This mentality is not necessarily exclusive to settlers; it can also extend to many of the Israeli soldiers, whose conduct is usually in line with what these settlers want. For instance, this settler killed 38 Palestinians inside the mosque. When the worshipers came running out of the mosque to escape the settler's fire, the army fired on them and killed 15. This mentality—incriminating the Palestinian just because he is Palestinian and always finding excuses for the Jew just because he is a Jew—is the core of the problem. This is what makes the existence of settlements the adversary of any attempt to achieve peace. We believe that the settlements' continuing presence is tantamount to a time bomb that will blow up among us at any minute. That is why our basic demand is to withdraw the settlers and end the presence of settlements in the areas from which Israel will withdraw. While this is being achieved, the Israelis must disarm the settlers completely.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] This horrendous crime makes us pause to clarify things. How can the Palestinians be completely protected in the coming stage?

[Al-Husayni] The best temporary measure would be international protection. But the final formula must be total Israeli withdrawal from our occupied Palestinian territories.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Then you demand international protection?

[Al-Husayni] We demand international protection. But until this is guaranteed, several steps must be taken. They should start by disarming settlers, changing the army's orders to open fire, and, more importantly, take practical steps in negotiations by beginning to withdraw immediately from Gaza and Jericho.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What about continuing peace talks between you and the Israeli side?

[Al-Husayni] I believe that any talk of negotiations must be preceded with an agenda in which the settlement issue takes priority.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Do you mean that the issue of settlements should take a new form?

[Al-Husayni] It is no longer possible to defer the issue of settlements to the second phase; it must be discussed immediately.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What will the next Palestinian step be following this dreadful massacre against worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque?

[Al-Husayni] If Israel wants to maintain the peace process, it must take these measures. On the negotiating level, we must start discussing the issue of settlers and settlement and immediately start to discuss the final solution. Second, Israel must take practical measures, including disarming settlers and evacuating the settlers from the areas that might cause provocation.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Thank you very much, al-Husayni.

[Al-Husayni] My thanks to you.

Calls For Israeli Action Against Colonists

BR2802160094 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 26 Feb 94 p 5

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, Palestinian leader in the occupied territories, by Umberto De Giovannangeli; place and date not given: "'They are Hunting the Arabs—Israel Is Pretending Not To See'"—first paragraph is L'UNITA introduction]

[Text] "This is a tragic day, not only for the Palestinians but also for the entire peace process in the Middle East. When massacres like the one in Hebron take place, it means that there is increasingly less room for talks and then all hopes will vanish." Faysal al-Husayni does not hide his pain and anger. "What happened," he stressed, "is horrible not only because of the size of the massacre. Hundreds of unarmed people were there to pray and had entrusted themselves to the protection of the Israelis. The result is there for everybody to see. Now, do not tell me that this was the isolated act of a 'madman': It would be an offense against common sense and an insult to the memory of the victims. The evidence that we have collected is clear-cut: More than one person fired, an authentic commando that acted with lucidity and that had planned the criminal act."

[De Giovannangeli] At such a dramatic moment, what requests are you making to the Yitzhaq Rabin government?

[Al-Husayni] Words of condemnation do not help. Concrete acts that demonstrate the real willingness of the Israeli authorities to strike at the extremist colonists and the extreme right-wing Jewish groups are needed. We are asking for the immediate opening of an inquiry that will not merely shed full light on who the executors and the instigators of the massacre are, but that will also ascertain the responsibility of the Israeli military authorities who had to guarantee safety in holy places. This is only the first step; it should be followed immediately by others...

[De Giovannangeli] Which?

[Al-Husayni] Israel must acknowledge without reserve that the colonist movement is now a paramilitary organization that has chosen terrorism as its tool of political action. We are asking Rabin to ban these groups and to arrest the leaders who in these years, and even after the Washington accords, have acted undisturbed, openly disseminating proclamations of war, and organizing authentic "Arab manhunts." We are saying to the Israeli prime minister: Any further hesitation in acting against the terrorists of the settlements, any further postponement in the implementation of the Washington accords, could definitively cancel the positive things that have been constructed over the past months.

[De Giovannangeli] Is a ban on extremist groups sufficient to save the negotiations?

[Al-Husayni] It is the minimum condition, a basis for facing the issue in depth: the dismantling of Jewish settlements in Gaza and the West Bank. Rabin has always wanted to postpone discussions on this point, which is decisive for achieving real peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. After the Hebron massacre any delay in resolving this problem would sound like an objective act of complicity with the extremists. We know well that not all the colonists are terrorists, but we also know that—and this fact certainly does not escape the Jewish military authorities—that the settlements have now been transformed into operational bases for Israeli paramilitary groups: It is where they train themselves, it is where they keep large quantities of weapons. For this reason the settlements should be dismantled already during the transition phase. It is the mere presence of the colonists in the territories that creates tension and fuels violence.

[De Giovannangeli] In which terms does the Hebron massacre reintroduce the issue of safety in the territories?

[Al-Husayni] Israel has always seen this problem from a unilateral point of view, like a fact that concerned its citizens only. And this definition has weighed heavily upon the Taba negotiations. Rabin deceived himself by thinking that he could get everything and the opposite of everything: The accord with the PLO and the support, or at least the non-ostracism, of the colonists that have always supported the nontransferability of "Judea and Samaria." On the other hand, the Hebron massacre bears witness to the impossibility—which moreover was repeatedly denounced by the PLO—of entrusting the safety and the life of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank to the Israeli troops. An immediate initiative by the United Nations is needed and in particular by the United States and Russia, the "cosponsors" of the negotiations on the Middle East: We are asking that the Palestinian population in the territories be placed under international protection until the withdrawal of the Israelis is completed. Only in this way can new massacres be avoided.

Sha'th Stresses Need for Palestinians' Protection

NC2702105594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0949 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, left Cairo for Tunis this morning.

In a predeparture statement, he said he will participate in the PLO Executive Committee meetings to discuss the repercussions of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre, which he described as extremely serious.

We cannot imagine that the situation in the occupied territories will remain as it was before, he said.

Sha'th added: When we said that the real obstacle to peace is the settlements and the settlers, the Israelis insisted that Palestinian extremists, so they claim, are trying to abort the peace process. The massacre has shown who in fact is the aggressor and who is the victim. The settlement activity is a flagrant and continuing act of aggression; it is an illegitimate usurpation of the occupied territories and a Judaization of the land.

Sha'th stressed that the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre is a major blow to the peace process and an attempt to foil it.

We will discuss how to protect the Palestinian people in light of the international developments, and we will ask the world to ensure international protection for the Palestinian people through use of UN forces and observers, Sha'th said.

He said the PLO will ask the world to force Israel to disarm the settlers.

For the peace process to move ahead, Sha'th said, protection and security for the Palestinian people must be provided until the Palestinian forces take over full responsibility for the usurped land.

On transferring the negotiations to Washington, Sha'th said this is not a magical solution following the massacre. He added: The Cairo negotiations were not the reason for the massacre; on the contrary, the Egyptian leadership hosted and greatly supported the talks, and we were close to signing an agreement and starting the Israeli withdrawal. I believe that a transfer of the talks will waste some time.

Sha'th said that the United States must pressure Israel to achieve a just peace with the Palestinians.

Sha'th: PLO To Discuss Protection Demands

LD2702220694 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The PLO Executive Committee will hold a meeting in Tunis tonight in which the Palestinian delegations to the negotiations with Israel in Washington, Paris, Cairo, and Taba will participate. On the decisions and recommendations which are expected to result from tonight's meeting, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat and the head of the Palestinian delegation in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the implementation of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, gave the following exclusive statement to this program:

[Begin recording] [Sha'th] This is the first major meeting to be held since the terrible massacre perpetrated by the murderous Israeli settlers in the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron. The first responsibility of the PLO is to protect the Palestinian people. So we must discuss this subject in order to arrive at specific recommendations for providing protection for our people—international protection and protection on the ground by the disarming of the settlers, the disarming of all the settlers, because without this protection cannot be provided for the Palestinian people.

In addition to this, we must also study the U.S. call for the negotiations to be held in Washington. We want to know what this call will add to the negotiations, how the change of venue will help to solve the problems facing the peace process, what role the United States will play in the coming negotiations, and at what level the negotiations will be. What are the main subjects—will they include the protection of the Palestinian people or not? [Correspondent] [passage omitted] Dr. Sha'th, you have announced in statements to the press that future negotiations will focus basically on providing international protection for the Palestinian people so that what happened in Hebron will not recur. In your opinion what form should this international protection take?

[Sha'th] Many forms are known to the world. A few weeks ago a massacre occurred in Sarajevo in which the number of victims was similar to the number of Palestinian martyrs in the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron. The result was a change in the international view of the Bosnian issue and of the protection required for the Bosnian people from the Serbs who were threatening the lives of the Bosnian Muslims daily. A minimum level of protection was provided which was not sufficient at all, but it was a minimum threat to the killers so that they would move their guns far from Sarajevo and protection would be provided for the Bosnian Muslims in Sarajevo.

There are international forces in Bosnia and in many other places—Sinai, the Syrian-Israeli borders, the Lebanese borders, and others. The agreement we signed in Washington comprises suitable and agreed international protection. Until this moment Israel has been dragging its feet in discussing this item which provides for observers and international troops who will give the minimum protection, in addition to the Palestinian police who must replace the army of occupation when the latter withdraws. [end recording]

Qaddumi on Tunis Meeting, U.S. Invitation

JN2602134294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1220 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Faruq Qaddumi, identified by his nom de guerre Abu-al-Lutf, chief of the PLO Political Department, "conducted a short while ago" by unidentified reporter; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Mr. Faruq Qaddumi: Have you taken any steps that could be announced, or at least what is the current tendency? Would the talks be suspended? And would they be resumed if your conditions are met or if new bases are laid down? Will the PLO be satisfied with moving the talks to Washington, as President Clinton called for?

[Qaddumi] Moving the talks is not sufficient. The invitation, which is addressed to the PLO, seems to forget what took place yesterday. The crime perpetrated by Israeli hands—through the army's collaboration—cannot be forgiven. Decisive steps must be taken by the international community to stop such acts in the future.

They say that Israel is protecting its security. In fact, we are the ones who need security. Israel is the hotbed of tension; it is the one which is creating such problems and practicing terrorism in the region. Israel is a Nazi state, which is perpetrating massacres. This is a Palestinian holocaust. They say that they were treated unjustly in history, however, they are inflicting their injustice on others.

The United States comes to cover up this crime with its call for negotiations. This is not the issue. There should be international guarantees to protect our people inside the occupied territory. Defenseless people are facing this Israeli military warmarchine supplied to Israel by the United States.

[Reporter] We can understand from what you are saying that the Palestinian leadership is now discussing whether or not the talks will continue. It seems from what you said about Israel that it is difficult to resume the talks.

[Qaddumi] The continuation of the talks is difficult now. We accepted the call for peace, but Israel is practicing the opposite. It is practicing terrorism. How can a man hold talks under these circumstances. We recalled all our delegations here to Tunis. First, the Security Council must issue a resolution condemning Israel and take the necessary steps in this regard. The United States should take measures to protect our people through the Security Council and international forces. Steps also must be taken to dismantle these settlements. The United States is saying that these settlements are obstacle to peace. This crime proves that these settlements are obstacle to peace. Therefore, these settlements must be removed. Otherwise, what is the benefit of these talks?

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, does this mean that the resumption of talks now depends on the removal of the settlements?

[Qaddumi] This should be the case. We are holding talks with the United States and the Security Council. These settlements must be dismantled and the occupation should end. This is the cause of tension in the region.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf: We must be clear in the wake of the terrible massacre which took place in the Ibrahimi Mosque. Does this mean that you are suspending the talks with Israel, or will you discuss the issue of settlements and settlers during the coming talks?

[Qaddumi] First, the Security Council should issue a resolution. Then, the second step comes; namely, the removal of these settlements. If no measures are taken these negotiations will be meaningless.

[Reporter] Israel announced that it will take firm measures against settlers?

[Qaddumi] Let us see what are these measures which will really provide security and peace for our people.

[Reporter] Shim'on Peres announced that the negotiations should be rescued? How can this be done?

[Qaddumi] He himself should take measures, not the Palestinian people.

[Reporter] But he speaks about rescuing the negotiations as they are in a dilemma?

[Qaddumi] They are the ones whose positions have brought about this dilemma, from the Cairo agreement until today. Every day, they go back on what they wrote in this agreement and postpone withdrawal. All this means Israel does not want peace in the region. It wants to be rewarded for its occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, this means all the basics on which the negotiations between you and Israel were initiated could be subject to review.

[Qaddumi] The negotiations cannot continue in this manner. The cosponsors of the conference, particularly the United States, should act as a sponsor that is not biased toward Israel. The weapons it gave to Israel are enough. It suffices that the United States says it wants to safeguard Israel's security. The Palestinian Arab people and the Arab people are the ones threatened by Israel because the latter is the hotbed of tension, and a factor of instability. No more lying to the world.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, the PLO calls for the sending of international forces to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories. A short while ago, Peres said he completely opposes this idea.

[Qaddumi] This means Israel does not want peace. The international community must decide, as it does in other international problems, to safeguard peace if today's world wants to establish stability and security in all the world's regions, including the Middle East.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, we know the atmosphere is tense after yesterday's massacre. How can one control the situation, security-wise, in the occupied territories?

[Qaddumi] This can take place by adopting speedy measures. First, the UN Security Council must not only condemn this crime but should take practical measures. The United States has to play a basic role in these measures. Israel, too, must respond to the international community's will by removing these settlements so that these terrorist acts do not recur.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, you are asking the international community, or the UN Security Council, to adopt practical measures. Give us an idea about these practical measures? What are you asking for?

[Qaddumi] First, international forces. Second, the removal of the settlements. Third, to expeditiously carry out withdrawal. Fourth, the United States must shoulder its responsibilities as a sponsor of the conference to have the peace process proceed on the road to eliminating the Israeli occupation.

[Reporter] These are the practical measures. However, during the meetings you are currently holding in Tunis, can you tell us about the atmosphere that prevails?

[Qaddumi] The atmosphere is very tense because this crime has exceeded all crimes. This is Palestine's holocaust, commited by the Israelis against the Palestinian people.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, do you have any new information about the way yesterday's massacre was committed?

[Qaddumi] The way in which the crime was committed is that while the worshipers were performing Friday prayers more than one settler came in. There were three groups. The settler was among them. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to have these great losses, more than 65 marytrs and 250 wounded. There were three groups. The permanent presence of the Israeli Army there helped these groups carry out their crime because they entered from three doors. But, this doctor of U.S. origin is the one who stepped ahead of the others and as a result of this was hit and killed.

[Reporter] Abu-al-Lutf, does this mean that the PLO directly accuses the Israeli Government and the Israeli Army and holds them responsible?

[Qaddumi] The Israeli Government is directly responsible for this crime.

[Reporter] Thank you, Mr. Faruq Qaddumi.

Protection Before Resumption of Talks

JN2602144994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] To further clarify the picture of the contacts on negotiations, our news program has telephoned Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, who spoke about the U.S. President's announcement of an expected Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Washington.

[Begin Qaddumi recording] In fact, yesterday's crime makes it impossible to think about the negotiations. Our delegations have been summoned from the committees and from the places where they hold negotiations. The issue now is not one of negotiations. It is a crime that has been committed against the Palestinian people, nay, against humanity. First, President Clinton should find a solution to this problem before he invites us for meetings to continue the negotiations. Ways and means must be forged to protect the Palestinian people. International resolutions must be adopted to condemn this heinous crime, in which scores were killed. The world must know that this state—described as democratic—is a false democracy. It is the source of anxiety and tension in the region, it is the hotbed of instability. Therefore, President Clinton should consider a solution to this problem before he invites us to such meetings. We are for peace and for the establishment of a just, durable peace. This crime has struck the peace process in the heart. This is because this is clear evidence that Israel does not want peace. [end recording]

On the Palestinian side, Faruq Qaddumi said: [Begin Qaddumi recording] We have asked the UN Security Council to adopt resolutions to protect the Palestinian people. We are demanding international forces to stop these massacres. We definitely know the international group will not hesitate at all to adopt the most stringent measures. Measures that clearly prove that Israel wants peace must be adopted. First, measures must be taken against Israel and against the perpetrators of this crime against humanity. Before anything else, the international group must not only condemn this, but make available means of protection for the Palestinian people. [end recording]

'Urayqat: Peace, Settlements 'Mutually Exclusive'

JN2702195394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Interview with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, chief Palestinian negotiator to the Washington talks, in Tunis, by unidentified correspondent, in the studio, on 27 February—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, in Tunis; good evening.

['Urayqat] Good evening to you.

[Correspondent] The government today decided to set up a state commission of inquiry on the tragic incident that took place in Hebron. A decision was also made ordering restrictions on the movement of Kakh activists and the release of around 1,000 detainees. How do you react?

['Urayqat] The decisions fall short of what the Israeli Government is required to do, especially given that it is aware of of the expectations of the Palestinian leadership. It must be made absolutely clear that negotiations cannot possibly continue for their own sake. Any negotiations in which the settlements do not figure as the first item on their agenda will be pointless. We had expected the Israeli Government to choose between peace and settlements. We had hoped the Israeli Government would order the complete disarming of the settlers, announce its acceptance of the idea of international protection for the Palestinians and a disbandment of the settlements in Gaza as a fist step. These resolutions are procedural and do not bear on the core of an issue that is closely bound up with the peace process.

[Correspondent] This evening, the Palestinian leadership is engaged in consultations following the tragic incident, especially as it may affect the peace negotiations. How does the Palestinian leadership plan to proceed on that score?

['Urayqat] As I have said, the negotiations are not an end in themselves. Negotiations are to bring peace. The

Israeli Government will have to choose between peace and settlements, since the two cannot go together; they are mutually exclusive.

The issue is far more serious than the Israeli or U.S. Administrations seem to think. The United States has ignored the core issue and focused on procedures like moving the talks to another site. Our opinion has been communicated to the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government. The failure of the Israeli Government to make meaningful decisions does not bode well for the future.

[Correspondent] When do you think the PLO will decide its next move on the peace process?

['Urayqat] I cannot say when. All I can tell you is that at 2000 today the meetings will begin, with the participation of PLO Executive Committee members. All are now here, as are the heads of other negotiating teams.

[Correspondent] Do you think the Palestinian-Israeli talks will stop?

['Urayqat] The talks are already at a standstill. As you know, the Washington talks were supposed to go on until next Wednesday. As I have said, negotiations are not held for their own sake. The next move is now up to Rabin and the Israeli Government. They will have to choose between peace and settlements.

[Correspondent] Am I to take it, then, that the PLO wants to reopen the Oslo file?

['Urayqat] Call it what you will. We are talking about an issue that has a direct bearing on our efforts to achieve peace. We are negotiating for peace. We have said time and again that settlements are a time bomb that may go off at any minute. One exploded on Friday. We cannot tell what will happen tomorrow, or the day after, or next month. The Israeli Government and the international community have a major responsibility on their hands—the settlements and international protection for the Palestinian people. Again, negotiations in which the settlements do not figure as the first item on their agenda will be meaningless.

Negotiating Team Member 'Asfur on Hebron Massacre

NC2602175194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1510 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Hasan 'Asfur, deputy chairman of the Security Affairs Committee in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on interim self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, has stated that international protection for the Palestinians in the occupied territories is a basic Palestinian demand and is again being raised now in an urgent way on the basis of the Oslo agreements between the PLO and the Israeli Government.

Commenting on the massacre that took place at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron yesterday morning in which scores of Palestinians were killed, 'Asfur told MENA that an executive mechanism must be worked out for an international presence in the occupied Palestinian territories.

He affirmed that the venue of the negotiations, whether it is Washington or any other place, is not a problem. The negotiations that took place in Taba and Cairo went well, particularly during the recent rounds. He noted that good progress was made in the last week of negotiations. The Palestinian delegation was anxious to reach an agreement to implement the self-rule plan as soon as possible.

'Asfur said that the massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque was carried out by a group of inhuman people. It was directed not only against the Palestinian people, but also against Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin personally and the Israeli Government.

He said that if Rabin and his government want the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles agreement, they must put a real end not only to the actions of these settlers but to the Israeli settlements and presence in the areas that will come under Palestinian autonomy.

'Asfur affirmed that what happened in Hebron proves that what is needed is not protection for the Israeli settlers but for the Palestinian people, because they are the ones facing danger from the Israeli settlers.

He expressed the hope that the Israeli Government will realize this and will adopt tangible measures to reduce, limit, and remove what could hamper the peace process.

Views Future of Peace Talks

TA2702142094 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Feb 94 p A4

[Telephone interview with Hasan 'Asfur, "a senior member of the Palestinian delegation and one of the drafters of the Oslo and Cairo agreements," in Cairo; by Gay Bekhor on 25 February]

[Text] [Bekhor] What is your view of the massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs? Who is to blame?

['Asfur] Beyond the self-understood condemnation, the violent event at the Ibrahimi Mosque (the Cave of the Patriarchs) reflects the collective mentality of the settlers, and not only the individual mentality of the perpetrators. The settlers would like to ruin the process over which we have been toiling so hard. They are not a threat merely to the Palestinian people, they are a threat to all those who want stability in the region.

Basically, if Israel wants stability—and it does—the settlers are its enemies. The Israeli Government should therefore act against its enemies, hard as it may be. They are the ones who would like Israel to remain a ghetto in the region. They are a barbaric mob whose activities should be terminated.

[Bekhor] How should Israel put an end to the settlers' activities in the territories?

['Asfur] I would place the emphasis on turning the settlers' acts into criminal offenses—a criminalization of acts. That would mean that they should be tried genuinely, and not in the forgiving manner prevalent until now. They should be shown for the murderers and criminals that they really are. It is now up to Yitzhaq Rabin to prove that he can act, and not just express his regret and shame, as he told President Yasir 'Arafat.

[Bekhor] The Oslo agreement, the drafting of which you took part in, acknowledges the existence of settlements during the interim period. The agreement forbids you from arguing against them remaining in place at this time, and yet senior PLO officials are now calling for their removal.

['Asfur] We agreed to the settlements remaining in place on the assumption that the settlers would be human, cooperate with the others, and that they would not pursue their activity which is barbaric and even worse, like that of animals. In the present situation, their presence has become a hazard and a threat.

[Bekhor] Do you intend to reopen the settlement clause of the Cairo agreement, as we have just heard?

['Asfur] What happened in Hebron is a direct message to Yitzhaq Rabin to reconsider his security stands. As of now, he should think of more than the settlers' security; on the contrary, he should think of protecting the Palestinians. They are not the threat, they are themselves threatened.

Everything we have committed ourselves to is still firm and abiding and valid as far as we are concerned, and we will remain committed to it. But what happened at the Ibrahimi Mosque will be tantamount to an Israeli violation of signed commitments, unless the matter is given genuine and serious attention.

[Bekhor] How will the Hebron massacre affect the continuation of the talks with your organization?

['Asfur] The peace process is not a transient thing that is related to any one event. Anything can threaten the peace process. What is needed is a substantive change in the Israelis' political thinking.

[Bekhor] Why has the PLO called for international intervention?

['Asfur] Our demand for international protection is not new, and the Oslo agreement validates it in a way. When we asked for international protection, the Israelis thought we were making slogans. Now they realize we meant it.

Who will protect the Palestinians? You? When a settler is killed, all Israel is in turmoil. You contact us demanding condemnation and even threatening us. But today, a condemnation by Rabin is not enough.

[Bekhor] What will happen when Palestinian rule is set up in the future? Will a similar event, in which Palestinians are murdered, suffice to ruin everything, or alternatively, will one Palestinian murderer killing settlers do it?

['Asfur] The Government of Israel should start worrying now about the possibility of Israelis being murdered. We will be responsible for the security of Palestinians. In any event, if the Israeli Government intends to protect Israelis by perpetrating daily massacres against the Palestinian people, then peace will never materialize.

[Bekhor] What is your version of the chain of events during the Hebron massacre?

['Asfur] The PLO has issued an official communique, and I refer you to it. I do not believe the Israeli version. Do you believe a single man could murder so many people, and without any intervention of Israeli soldiers to boot? It was all prearranged, and there was more than one killer.

PLO Envoy Calls on Israel to Disarm Settlers

LD2502194694 Rome RAI Due Television Network in Italian 1845 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Remarks by Nimr Hammad, PLO representative to Italy, made while speaking to correspondent Michele Cucuzza on 25 February in Rome—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Hammad] The settlers are responsible for this tragedy. This time the Israeli Government must make the brave decision to disarm the settlers and to clearly state that the settlements are illegal, and these settlers must be told that this land is occupied territory. If the Israeli Government does not make this decision, the entire peace process could lose its credibility. This will not only give rise to extremism, but the peace process will be refuted: Even the moderates will decide that it is meaningless. [passage omitted]

AFP Rounds Up Reaction to Hebron Massacre

NC2602093294 Paris AFP in English 0041 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Tunis, Feb 26 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief Yasir 'Arafat called the massacre of 52 Palestinians in a Hebron mosque Friday a "serious blow" to the peace process. [passage omitted]

A member of the PLO Executive Committee, Jamal al-Surani called for the PLO to break off negotiations with Israel and for Arabs to unite against Israeli violence, the Egyptian news agency MENA reported.

The United Arab Emirates said the mosque killings demonstrated the "complicity" of the Israeli government.

"This savage killing, carried out under the eyes of the Israeli occupation forces, demonstrates the complicity of the Israeli government," the UAE news agency WAM quoted an official spokesman as saying.

The spokesman called on the UN and states sponsoring the peace process to take "firm and concrete measures to protect the Palestinians". He called for the "settlers to be disarmed, Jewish settlements in the occupied territories to be dismantled so as to avoid a repeat of such killings".

Qatar called on Israel to carry out an official and "public" investigation into the massacre.

In London, Israeli deputy foreign minister Yosi Beilin said the mosque shooting was "the most terrible thing that has happened to us in many years, but we hope it will not be a reason or pretext to put an end to the (peace) process."

He added: "What we have to do is to accelerate the process.... We hope the Palestinians will share with us this view despite this horrible event."

In Amman, the Jordanian branch of the Moslem Brotherhood fundamentalist organisation urged the Arabs to "pull out of the peace negotiations" with Israel.

The Moslem Brotherhood called on the "PLO leadership, the Arab countries, and in particular Jordan to withdraw from the negotiations," and appealed to the PLO "to return to the armed struggle."

Jordan has called for three days of national mourning starting on Saturday for those killed in Hebron.

Leaders of Christian communities in Jordan, quoted by PETRA NEWS AGENCY, also "firmly condemned" the killing and called for UN protection for the Palestinians.

The leader of Egypt's Coptic Christians Patriarch Shanudah III likewise condemned the killing and urged Christians to consult the Moslems before making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to show solidarity with the Palestinians.

The Islamic Resistance Movement HAMAS has put all its fighters "on a maximum state of alert" and called on them "to retaliate as hard as possible to avenge the slaughter in Hebron." [passage omitted]

Iran, which opposes the peace talks and backs Islamic militant groups, declared three days of mourning.

A group formed to oppose the autonomy accord, Black September 13, vowed to "commit a series of attacks against Jewish institutions inside and outside the occupied territories" until the collapse of the self-rule deal.

'Enraged' Camp Citizens Call For Revenge

JN2602123694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Feb 94 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Al-Baq'ah Camp—More than 3,000 people enraged by the news of the slaughter of at least 89 Palestinians at a mosque in Hebron early Friday [25 February] took to the streets of this sprawling [refugee] camp to demand revenge for the killings.

They also denounced the 27-month-old Arab-Israeli peace process and demanded that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) renounce its Sept. 13 autonomy agreement with Israel and leave the peace talks altogether.

Calls for retribution for the attack in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, where an Israeli settler opened machine-gun fire on worshippers early Friday, were a dominant theme for a demonstration in this camp of nearly 100,000 residents.

"Where are you Saddam, where are your missiles," chanted the crowd, repeating after half a dozen masked youths perched atop a pickup truck mounted with loud speakers. They were referring to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, who fired more than 40 long-range missiles at Israel during the 1991 Gulf War over Kuwait.

For many residents of this squalid camp, President Saddam, despite Iraq's defeat in the war, remains a hero who was entrapped by the U.S. and other Israeli allies into a war aimed at eliminating Iraq's military power which they saw as a potential threat to the Jewish state.

"Would the Israelis dare to slaughter Palestinians if Iraq was as strong as it was before the war?" asked Husayn who wore a headdress to conceal his face.

The situation in al-Baq'ah appeared under control, but residents said emotions ran high and that they could not rule out individual acts of violence similar to an attack in downtown Amman where a British tourist was stabbed by a native of Hebron.

"People are enraged and seething with anger and frustration over their inability to do anything to avenge the killings," said an elderly grocer in al-Baq'ah. "Many people here are from Hebron and no doubt some of their relatives were among the dead and injured at Ibrahimi Mosque."

Black flags hung over electric poles and men and women gathered at street corners listening to radios and exchanging information to find out whether any of their relatives were among the victims of the attack.

Rejection of the peace talks with Israel was another dominant call of the protesters as they wound through the narrow streets of this camp, one of 11 camps housing nearly 300,000 Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

"No to peace and yes to the gun," they chanted, demanding an end to Palestinain participation in the peace negotiations. "No to self-rule, yes to holy war."

Despite the relative strength of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's mainstream Fatah among al-Baq'ah residents, many of those taking part in the protest said they felt the PLO-led peace talks with Israel were getting nowhere.

"As the talks get from one round to another, it is becoming increasingly clear that Israel has no intention of returning the land to us," said Walid Nash'at, who was seven when his family fled their home village in the West Bank in 1967.

"I supported the autonomy accord from the very beginning, hoping that it would lead to a just solution to our problems," said 'Amr, an electrician who declined to give his second name.

"But it seems that our problems are only getting worse, if Israelis can massacre Palestinians with impunity," he said.

Muhammad 'Uwaydah, an Islamic Action Front (IAF) member of Parliament from al-Baq'ah, told the rally: "Today's killing has proved that there cannot be any coexistence with Israel."

"I call on the Palestinian leadership to withdraw from the peace talks," he said as the crowd shouted: "Allahu Akbar" and "Jihad (holy war) is the only road to Palestine."

Arab League Envoy Urges Removal of Settlements

NC2602160594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1217 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Harun Hashim Rashid, alternate Palestinian delegate to the Arab League, today said that the emergency meeting that the Arab League Council will hold tomorrow night, Sunday, will focus on the developments in the region following yesterday's massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

Rashid told MENA that the Palestinian delegation will call on the Arab League to take a unified stance in the face of repeated acts of aggression by the Israeli settlers and Army. The Palestinians will also urge international protection of the Palestinian people for security and stability to prevail and as a necessary condition for pursuing efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace, Rashid said.

Rashid said that the Palestinians will also call for the presence of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories to be reconsidered. He added that there is a need to remove these settlements because of the threat they pose to the peace process.

Answering a question about the massacre's effect on the peace talks between the Palestinians and Israel, which have already made significant progress, the Palestinian official said that such attacks certainly affect the peace process and demonstrate Israel's lack of credibility.

'Hardline' Groups Vow 'Revenge' for Massacre

Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Others React

NC2502151394 Paris AFP in English 1436 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, Feb 25 (AFP)—Hardline Palestinian groups vowed on Friday [25 February] to carry out revenge attacks for the massacre of more than 50 Palestinians at a mosque in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas put all its fighters "on a maximum state of alert" and called on them "to retaliate as hard as possible to avenge the slaughter in Hebron."

In a statement to AFP here, Hamas said that "emergency military plans were put in place to strike at Zionist targets, occupation soldiers and settlers."

It also declared that the peace process had been dealt a "fatal blow" by the massacre. One or more settlers shot dead 53 Palestinians and wounded dozens more inside a mosque at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, and eight other Arabs were killed in clashes with troops.

Hamas has been at the forefront of attacks on Jews in the occupied territories since the PLO signed its peace deal with Israel in Washington on September 13.

A group formed to oppose the deal, Black September 13, vowed to "commit a series of attacks against Jewish institutions inside and outside the occupied territories" until the collapse of the autonomy accord.

The attacks will take place in the next few days, said an anonymous caller to AFP in Beirut identifying himself as a member of the group.

From now on "all settlers are legitimate targets" for Palestinian militants, he added.

Black September leader Munir Maqdah, who is based in Lebanon, blamed Arafat's policies for the massacre and said that he "has no other choice to shoot himself in the head and commit suicide."

In Damascus, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, two hardline PLO groups, denounced the massacre as a "perfidious crime" committed with the knowledge of Israeli troops.

They promised the "martyrs and the people" that the FDLP's Red Star fighters and the PFLP's Red Eagles in the territories will take revenge against settlers and Israeli troops.

The PFLP called an emergency meeting of the Damascus-based "Alliance of Palestinian Forces"—which includes the PFLP, the DFLP, and Hamas—in order to decide how to respond.

Syria—along with the PLO, Lebanon and Jordan—is involved in the peace negotiations with Israel, but hosts the hardline groups as a means to pressure the Jewish state with whom it has made little progress in the talks.

Another group, the Revoltionary Army for the Liberation of Palestine, threatened to assassinate the PLO leader.

As the threats flew, 'Arafat said he had told his UN envoy to request an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council "so as to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of our people."

"This massacre will have very serious fallout, not only on the (Israeli-Palestinian negotiations) but also at all levels and in all fields," 'Arafat added.

'Arafat accused the Israeli army of "complicity, adding "how can they allow settlers to bear arms and not our people?"

His organization declared three days of mourning and a general strike in the occupied territories.

The PLO's West Bank chief Faysal al-Husayni warned that "the peace process is dying."

Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid and Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali both warned that the massacre threatened the negotiations.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin condemned the "odious massacre" and called on "Jews and Arabs to show restraint and not to become involved in provocative acts."

King Husayn of Jordan was among the leaders who joined the chorus of condemnation.

Hamas Warns Negotiators To Withdraw

JN2802093194 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 94 p 10

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Suhayr 'Ubaydat]

[Text] Amman—The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) Sunday [27 February] renewed a call on the mainstream Fatah faction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to renounce the Middle East peace process and join hands to liberate Palestine through armed struggle.

"We call upon our brothers in Fatah to join hands and escalate the intifada and holy war against the enemy," said an open letter signed by Hamas.

In a separate statement, the group, which is dominant in the occupied Gaza Strip, warned Palestinian negotiators to quit the peace talks or face unspecified consquences.

Hamas is the largest religious-oriented group in the occupied territories challenging the domination of the PLO and Fatah, which is led by Yasir 'Arafat, who is also chairman of the PLO.

Hamas and Fatah, at two ends of political ideology, have been locked in a power struggle in elections to various Palestinian organisations and student unions in the occupied territries.

"The (massacre in Hebron) in which hundreds of our people died confirms the righteousness of the resistance and armed struggle... and exposes the Zionists' claims that they wish to live with our people in peace," said the statement.

In its open letter, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times, Hamas urged "our brothers in Fatah ... to respond to this brotherhly and national call ... to abort the surrendering scheme led by the Oslo men."

Hamas, while vowing to wreck the autonomy accord through escalated attacks against Israeli targets, appeared to drop its earlier stand that it would not take up arms against fellow Palestinians.

In its message addressed to the Palestinians in the occupied territories, Hamas threatened Palestinian negotiators with attacks if they do not withdraw from negotiations with Israel.

"We demand that the Oslo team announce their immediate withdrawal from the negotiations with Israel ... we will not allow a handful of us (Palestinians) to continue negotiationbs with those murderers at the expense of the Palestinian people," said the letter.

The letter also called on the Palestinians in the occupied territories to observe a three-day general strike, escalate the intifada and carry out revenege attacks against Israeli soldiers and settlers and engage in fights with them.

"We call on our people to avenge the killing of our martyrs and consider the occupation troops and settlers as permanent targets wherever they may be," read the letter.

The letter also called for demonstrations and marches throughout the occupied territories.

It also called on the people of Hebron to protect the Ibrahimi mosque and continue praying in it.

Salih Ra'fat, of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) Sunday urged the PLO to freeze its negotiations with Israel. He also called on Mr. 'Arafat not to respond to U.S. President Bill Clinton's call for a summit with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Washington.

Reports of such an invitation by Mr. Clinton were Saturday denied by a spokesman for Mr. Rabin, who said that the only invitation out of Washington was to lower-level peace negotiators to resume the talks. But other sources confirmed the invitation.

Mr. Ra'fat also called for the protection of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, the dismantling of settlements and the disarming of Jewish settlers.

Sulayman al-Najjab, member of the PLO Executive Committee, called for the suspension of the peace negotiations with Israel for the time being until they are preceded with conditions that are in line with international legitimacy.

Islamic Jihad Vows to Revenge Hebron Deaths

JN2502210794 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1840 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine has issued a statement in which it said: Our kinsfolk's blood will not go in vain. The blood of the faithful will not sink in the sands of oblivion. The bullets of our strugglers are the imminent response to the Zionists. Violent confrontations with the occupiers are the road that our people have willingly pursued. Our people will not abandon their sincere option until the entire sacred Palestinian homeland is liberated and until we avenge every Palestinian soul killed by the filthy Zionist hands.

Islamic Jihad-al-Aqsa Battalions Statement

JN2602161994 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Feb 94 p 35

[Statement issued by the Islamic Jihad Movement for the Liberation of Palestine—the al-Aqsa Battalions; in Amman on 25 February]

[Text] The Islamic Jihad Movement for the Liberation of Palestine—the al-Aqsa Battalions announces its extreme rejection and denunciation of the appalling act and bloody massacre that took place at the Ibrahimi Mosque against innocent, defenseless monotheistic worshipers from among the sons our people in the occupied homeland. The movement stresses that this massacre by Israeli settlers took place in collusion with Israeli troops and the intelligence service. It coincided with the yesterday's [24 February] massacre when the Israeli Army waged a battle with rockets against Hamas fugitives in Abu Dis, near Jerusalem. The movement considers this massacre and this escalation a glaring violation of the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September 1993 and the peace process. The movement holds the Israeli side and its political, military, and security leaders responsible for all the massacres, killings, and assassinations that are taking place against our Palestinian people. They are responsible for allowing settlers to carry the weapons that they aim at the sons of our people and use to commit massacres and killings. The movement views today's massacre, the collusion of Israeli troops in it, what happened in Abu Dis yesterday, and the earlier Israeli military escalation as an assassination of the peace process and sufficient justification for military escalation by all Palestinian resistance factions and for continued jihad and revolution against the nightmare of Israeli occupation. Our Palestinians will not forgive these massacres. God is great. Glory for the free mujahidin.

PFLP-GC: Attack 'Fruit' of Gaza-Jericho

JN2702193194 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1710 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, (SANA)—Ahmad Jabril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], has said the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre is a natural extension of the Zionist enemy settler practices against our Palestinian people.

In a statement distributed here today, Jibril added that the savage massacre, which was perpetrated by the Zionist enemy against a gathering of Palestinian worshipers, is a fruit of the Gaza-Jericho agreement that gave the settler Zionist enemy a short-cut to legitimizing its occupation of Palestinian Arab territories.

Jibril said: The determination of our Palestinian Arab people and Arab and Islamic nation will punish those who conceded our sanctities, territories, and history. He emphasized in conclusion that the Palestinian people inside the occupied homeland and in the diaspora will not forgive the killers their deed, and their revenge will be great. The savage massacre will increase our people's and our nation's firmness, determination, and confidence in the inevitable triumph.

Ahmad Jibril Vows 'Retribution'

JN2602201194 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Reacting to the savage Zionist massacre, Mr. Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], has said that there is nothing surprising in the Zionist acts of barbarity. The Ibrahimi Mosque massacre will not be the last. It is a natural link in the chain of the Zionist enemy's actions against our Palestinian people, whose resolve to liberate their stolen homeland will never weaken in the face of the Zionist occupation and its tools of war, which are supplied by a U.S. Administration that cares only about its own interests.

The U.S. Administration's policies, now as in the past, show how biased it is to the Zionist enemy. This fact makes us certain that for Washington, Arab blood is not worth a drop of oil. The U.S.-sponsored rounds of negotiations over Arab rights, including Palestinian rights, only illustrate the solidity of the American-Zionist alliance, which is being joined by weaklings from our midst in a cheap transaction involving the homeland, the people, and sanctities.

The PFLP-GC secretary general's press statement added: The savagery committed by the Zionist entity against

Palestinian worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque is a corollary of the negotiations over blood, dignity, and rights. It is one of the fruits yielded by the Gaza-Jericho accord. This gave the Zionist entity a short cut to its goals and helped it legitimize its occupation of Palestinian Arab territory. It laid the groundwork for the gangs of killers and settlers to vent their hatred and Nazism against our people, whose only weapon is confidence in the inevitability of their triumph over this barbaric invasion.

We can only conclude from the incidents at the Ibrahimi Mosque that the real killers are those who encouraged the Jews and stretched out their hands to the enemy, who saw that its interests are being met by concessions from the 'Arafat leadership and certain Arab regimes who are playing the role of broker to promote mutual recongition and a settlement that by no means serves Arab or Islamic interests.

Jibril's statement added: The customary denunciations and condemnations by official Arab regimes will do nothing to dress our people's wounds nor restore their stolen rights, at a time when these regimes are working on opening up to the Zionist enemy and to their capitals becoming playgrounds for these vagabonds.

We in the PFLP-GC are aware of the scale of the conspiracy and what the forces of injustice, capitulation, and concessions are out to achieve. We are confident, therefore, that our Palestinian Arab people and Arab and Muslim nation will take revenge on those who have bargained away sanctities, land, and history.

Our Palestinian people inside the occupied homeland and in the diaspora camps will never forgive the killers their deed. Their retribution will be great. We are a nation of martyrs and martyrdom and have no fear of death. This horrible massacre will only serve to stiffen our people's and nation's resolve and boost their confidence in the inevitability of victory.

PFLP-GC Official Criticizes 'Arafat

JN2802103694 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Damascus, 28 Feb (SANA)—Dr. Talal Naji, assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], has stated that the heinous crime in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron shows the Zionist enemy's hatred of the Arab and Islamic nation.

Interviewed by the newspaper TISHRIN today, Naji said that by this vile, hideous crime, the Zionists have proved their racist, Nazi, and fascist mentality. He demanded the world to uphold justice, human rights, and the right to self-determination. He expressed surprise that the United States was satisfied with the issuance of condemnation statements despite the ugliness of the massacre at a time when it would raise a hue and cry if the dead were Jews. He called on the international community to press for an immediate Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and to impose sanctions on Israel for not complying with the international legitimacy resolutions and charters.

Dr. Naji criticized Yasir 'Arafat for making concessions to Israel and said that 'Arafat's policy encourages the Zionist enemy and gives it the green light. [passage omitted]

PFLP, PLF, Hamas Hold U.S., PLO Responsible

JN2602142194 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1210 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], has said the basic lesson learned from the black criminal act is the direct responsibility the leaders of Israel hold at a time when they are talking about peace and security. Habash also held the U.S. Administration responsible through its protection of Israel. Habash did not exempt Yasir 'Arafat and the Oslo-Cairo team, as he said, from responsibility through their signing of agreements that entrench the occupation and protect the settlements.

In a statement published in the Iraqi newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH, Abu-al-'Abbas [Muhammad 'Abbas], secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF], called for halting the negotiations with Israel and resuming armed struggle.

Through its official spokesman Ibrahim Ghawsh, who spoke at a news conference, Hamas called on the PLO to return to its people. Hamas criticized the president of the PLO for continuing negotiations. Hamas reiterated its rejection of the Oslo-Cairo agreements and said these agreements maintain the settlements as time bombs that explode in the faces of Palestinians every day.

Hawatimah, Others Condemn Attack

JN2502170894 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, 25 Feb (SANA)—Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has announced that the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre is the dirty and bloody fruit of the PLO agreement with Israel, which ignored and legalized the settlements in the occupied territories, and viewed these territories as disputed land.

In a press statement today, Hawatimah said PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat should learn a lesson, cancel the Oslo and Cairo agreements, and return to national unity and consensus in accordance with international legitimacy.

Hawatimah said escalation of the intifadah to topple the Oslo and Cairo agreements opens the door for a political settlement based on withdrawal, the end of settlement construction and massacres, and securing the right to self-determination and independence.

In a similar statement, Khalid 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, said the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre has come after the PLO and Israel signed the Gaza and Jericho agreement, which provided the enemy with a cover for its repeated crimes.

A statement issued by the Alliance of the Palestinian Forces said the atrocious crime is but the bloody fruit of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and a product of 'Arafat and his team's policy which submitted to all Israeli conditions.

The statement, issued following an extraordinary command meeting of the alliance, emphasized that the Gaza-Jericho agreement entrenched the Zionist occupation and accepted the continuation of settlements and settlers on our land and among our kinsfolk in order to kill and destroy.

'Alliance' Urges Escalating Intifadah

JN2502174594 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1615 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] 25 Feb, (SANA)—Nayif Hawatimah, the secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has denounced the massacre perpetrated by the Israeli settlers in Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn today. In a press statement today, Hawatimah asserted that the crime will not go unpunished. He said that withdrawal of occupation forces from the occupied territory and giving the Palestinian people the right of self-determination will put an end to the tampering of the settlers and occupiers with Palestinian blood.

Earlier today, the DFLP called for general and comprehensive strike in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.

In a similar statement, Khalid 'Abd-al-Majid, the secretary general of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, said that the crime perpetrated by the Zionists in the Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn today is one of the most grotesque crimes against civilians in this age. The crime he said, is part of an Israeli scheme to terrorize and expel our Palestinian people from the occupied territory. He called on the UN Security Council and all world states to take measures to ensure the Zionists will not commit massacres against the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian Forces Alliance leadership has issued a statement in which it denounced the mosque massacre and called for escalating the intifadah against the occupiers and unify the ranks of our people in and outside of the occupied territory to confront the crimes of the occupation and the settlers.

The statement, which was issued following an emergency meeting held by the alliance to discuss the massacre, appealed to peoples of the world and international organizations and establishments to put an end to the Zionist arrogance and the settlers' recklessness and tampering with Palestinian blood.

The statement called for a general strike and national mourning for the martyrs in the massacres and saluted the steadfast people in the occupied territory who came out in Hebron, Nazareth, and the Golan to confront the enemy forces.

PNC Members Meet in Jordan, Issue Statement

JN2702192194 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1525 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, 27 Feb (PETRA)—Salim al-Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has condemned the abhorrent crime against worshippers at Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque. He held the Israeli Government fully responsible for this criminal act perpetrated by malicious Zionist settlers in collaboration with regular Israeli military forces.

In a statement issued today after a meeting held by some PNC members in Jordan, al-Za'nun added that the criminal practices against our people's masses in the occupied homeland are a natural result of the occupation and the Israeli settlements that are spread throughout the occupied territories.

He demanded the dismantlement and removal of the settlements and the repatriation of the settlers. He also demanded the full withdrawal of the occupation army from occupied Palestinian territories, including holy Jerusalem. Al-Za'nun called for offering help and support to the steadfast kinsfolk in the occupied homeland and for holding a PNC session.

Dissident Fatah Movement Reacts, Issues Statement

'Massacre' Will Not Go Unpunished

JN2602154494 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Feb 94 p 32

[By Hani al-Duwayk]

[Excerpt] Amman—'Abbas Zaki, Fatah Central Committee member, and secretary of the Higher Intifadah Committee, has said that military operations will be carried out against the settlers and Israeli occupation forces in reply to the odious massacre the killer settlers committed under the protection of the forces of occupation. He stressed this odious crime will not go unpunished.

'Abbas Zaki told AL-DUSTUR this massacre is within the framework of the Israeli scheme to use terror operations similar to those committed in Dayr Yasin to empty Hebron of its inhabitants. He added: Not content with its crime in Hebron, the enemy tried to commit another massacre during prayer in a mosque in Sa'ir at noon yesterday.

'Abbas Zaki said: From this premise, we insist on removing these settlers and setting a timetable for dismantling the settlements. He said: The slogan should be the West Bank and Gaza first and not Gaza-Jericho first, and international legitimacy resolutions should be implemented. [passage omitted]

Fatah Statement Blames 'Arafat

JN2802115794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Feb 94 p 14

["Political statement issued by the Fatah Central Committee;" place and date not given]

[Text] The Fatah Central Committee held an emergency meeting yesterday morning to discuss the serious dimensions of the abhorrent bloody massacre perpetrated by the Zionist settlers against Palestinian worshipers at dawn prayers in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Hebron, in which over 50 were martyred and hundreds wounded.

The Fatah Central Committee would like to emphasize the following:

1. This new ugly Zionist crime clearly reveals the true nature of the racist Zionist grudge and the Zionist enemy's practices and massacres against our Palestinian and Arab people in Dayr Yasin, Kafr Qasim, Qibya, Nahhalin, Sabra, Shatila, South Lebanon, the Golan, 'Uyun Qara [Rishon LeZiyyon], and al-Aqsa Mosque. This ugly crime clearly confirms the role and function of the Zionist entity, which is weighing heavily on the land of Palestine and which is seeking through all hostile and racist means to uproot our people from their homeland as a prelude to Judaizing the land of Palestine and ending the national identity of our Palestinian people.

2. This criminal bloody massacre is the first fruit of the treasonous agreement 'Arafat and his Zionized team signed with the enemy. It is a natural result of capitulation, submission, and normalization with the Zionist enemy. The enemy practices against our people and nation have been further confirmed by its crime in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque. This clearly proves that there could be no peace or reconciliation with this Zionist entity.

3. While we hold the Zionist enemy and its leadership and settlers fully responsible for this heinous crime, we hold 'Arafat and his Zionized team responsible for the blood of the Ibrahimi Mosque martyrs and wounded.

O masses of our Palestinian people, O masses of our Arab nation:

By this crime, the enemy sought to extinguish the spirit of revolution and valiant intifadah of our people in the occupied homeland, who reject the 'Arafatist treasonous agreements. It also sought to bring about the surrender of our struggling masses, which insist on maintaining confrontation with the enemy. The enemy targets, however, have foundered on the rock of the spirit of struggle and confrontation which manifested itself immediately after the early news of the Zionist crime. Popular anger swept through the entire Palestinian territory in the form of clashes with the Zionist enemy through which our struggling people emphasized that the spirit of struggle and resistance is always glowing and that their insistence on continuing their confrontation with the enemy and toppling the treasonous agreements and liquidatory plans cannot be stopped by the continuing Zionist massacres and repressive acts in the occupied homeland.

Hebron Fatah Movement Cancels Cease-fire

JN2802100794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Feb 94 p 32

[Text] Amman—The Fatah Liberation Movement in Hebron has called on the Palestinian command to immediately suspend negotiations with the Israeli Government at all levels until the settlers are removed from the occupied territories. The movement also announced the cancellation of the cease-fire between its combat groups and the forces of occupation, and herds of settlers and the resumption of operations against them.

The movement called on the strike forces to escalate the intifadah against the settlers and the army forces at all times and to consider any settler who passes in Hebron streets as a target for our strike forces.

The movement also called on national institutions and figures to halt all forms of contacts with the departments of the military governor in Hebron, and held the Rabin government responsible for preparing and implementing the horrendous crime perpetrated by the settlers under the protection of the occupation forces.

Cairo Fatah Envoy Gives Casualty Count of Hebron

NC2602141694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative in Cairo, has told MENA that the number of Palestinians martyred by the Israeli massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron and the subsequent incidents in the rest of occupied territories has risen to 91 with more than 500 others wounded.

Al-Qidrah explained that 79 martyrs and 256 wounded fell in the Ibrahimi Mosque and in the city of Hebron alone as a result of bullets fired by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian masses who came out to rescue their kinsfolk from the massacre.

He added that six martyrs fell in Gaza and 70 were wounded, 65 were injured in the al-Aqsa Mosque area in Jerusalem, one martyr fell in Nabulus and several were wounded, one martyr fell in Tulkarm and several were wounded, and several people were wounded in Ramallah and Jericho.

The Palestinian official added that one person was martyred in Bethlehem and 12 were wounded, most of them natives of Bayt Jala, a town with a Christian majority. In the Qalandiya township three martyrs fell and several people were wounded.

Al-Qidrah announced that he conveyed messages today from Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat to al-Azhar Imam Shaykh Jad-al- Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, Awqaf Minister Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, and His Holiness Coptic Pope Shanudah III explaining to them the details of yesterday morning's massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, which later spread to the rest of the occupied territories.

MENA has learned that His Eminence Al-Azhar Imam Shaykh Jad-al- Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq informed al-Qidrah that prayers for the martyrs' souls will be said in Egypt's mosques.

Pope Shanudah II told the Palestinian envoy that masses will be celebrated for their souls in Egypt's churches tomorrow, Sunday.

Contacts Made To Convene Fatah Revolutionary Council

JN2802110094 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Feb 94 p 32

[Text] Amman—Well-informed Palestinian sources have stated that several Fatah leaders and cadres are holding consultations among themselves to convene Fatah' Revolutionary Council to discuss the situation in the Palestinian arena in light of the recent developments in the occupied territories and the bloody massacre committed by the Rabin government against worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

A Fatah source told AL-DUSTUR that there are undeclared real divisions in the Fatah Movement ranks, the most acute of which is that the Fatah command outside the territories has lost control over the Fatah strike forces in the occupied territories which call for suspending the negotiations with Israel.

The sources added that several Fatah military officials might announce stands completely different from Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's stands if the Revolutionary Council does not convene.

Arab Liberation Front Urges Armed Response

JN2502165594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1529 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Nicosia, 25 Feb (INA)—The Arab Liberation Front [ALF] has denounced the horrendous, racial crime that claimed the lives of dozens of martyrs as they were performing prayers this morning at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. An ALF spokesman said the outrage only demonstrates the spiteful nature of the aggression against our people and our nation under the cover of the new world order. Some who are worn out by the struggle and dazzled by the deceptive sparkle of power rushed to make peace with the enemy and recognized its presence on our usurged territory, the spokesman added.

This ghastly crime and other Zionist atrocities have in common the objective of controlling Arab territories and eliminating their owners by expulsions or killings. Only its scale sets this latest crime apart from previous outrages, the spokesman noted.

We in the ALF denounce the West's collusion with the Zionists and their condoning of crimes against our people. We denounce the flagging resolve of the godfathers of a settlement with this usurper Zionist entity, and reiterate our outright rejection of all forms of settlements with this racial and usurper enemy.

We urge all Palestinian and Arab negotiators to withdraw from the talks and rejoin the struggle in all its forms, most of all armed struggle, as the only option to liberating our land and safeguarding the dignity and life of the Arab individual.

The spokesman called on the Arab nation and its nationalist forces to speak up against Arab regimes associated with imperialism and who compromise Arab rights and gamble with the future of the Arabs.

The spokesman said in conclusion: The Arab masses and the Palestinians in particular must sit in the trench of the Mother of Battles—the trench of justice and dignity that leads to a bright and prosperous future.

Party Urges Protection of Palestinians, Halt to Talks

JN2702165194 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, 27 Feb (SANA)—The Political Bureau of the Palestinian People's Party [PPP] has demanded a halt to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations until international protection is provided for Palestinian citizens in reply to the heinous massacre perpetrated at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque where innocent worshipers from the Palestinian people's sons fell as victims.

In a statement issued here today, the PPP held the Israeli Government responsible for the massacre. This government facilitated the building of settlements for these criminals, armed them, and was lenient toward their previous crimes, such as what happened with the perpetrators of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Hebron university massacres.

The PPP added that the Israeli Government cannot guarantee the Palestinian citizens' security. In fact, it joins in inflicting more Palestinian casualties and punishes their kinsfolk by firing at them and imposing collective punishments on them.

The PPP pointed out that such a situation cannot help achieve peace. It demanded that negotiations should be suspended until fair conditions conforming to the resolutions of international legitimacy are in place.

Al-Sa'iqah: Hebron 'Crime' Result of Oslo Accord

JN2602204694 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The general command of the Organization of the Vanguards of the Popular Liberation War, al-Sa'iqah Forces, has issued as statement, which said: The Zionist enemy forces perpetrated an abhorrent crime at the Ibrahimi Mosque, adding a fresh outrage to its long list of crimes to promote its genocidal policy against our Arab people and liquidate their national cause.

This new Zionist crime is a natural corollary of the capitulatory agreement signed by 'Arafat with the Zionists in Oslo and Cairo and a consequence of the policies of relinquishment and capitulation pursued by 'Arafat and his deviationist methods.

We promise our people to remain faithful to our cause and national struggle and the martyrs' blood until all Palestinian territory is liberated.

PNSF Head Urges PLO, Syrian Coordination

JN2502181994 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, 25 Feb (SANA)—Khalid al-Fahum, head of the Palestinian National Salvation Front has condemned the barbaric aggression against Palestinian worshipers in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn today, which emphasizes the aggressiveness of Israel and extremist Zionist forces.

In a press statement, al-Fahum said we emphasized more than once the importance of coordination with all Arab countries, especially Syria, in order to attain the just and comprehensive peace we want. However, the PLO's influential leadership continues to offer concessions to an enemy that does not want peace, but works to impose capitulation on the PLO.

Al-Fahum urged the PLO leadership to stop its policy of relinquishment and to cancel the Oslo and Cairo agreements so it will be able to work for Palestinian national unity and to restore coordination with the Arab countries, especially Syria, and to continue the struggle to attain the Palestinian people's right to return, self-determination, and to set up their independent state on their national soil.

Bayt al-Maqdis Group Condemns Hebron Shooting

JN2602210794 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The Bayt al-Maqdis Movement [The Islamic Jihad Movement-Bayt al-Maqdis] has issued a statement, which said: The injustice, killings, and displacements that have been taking place in Palestine for decades and that climaxed in the killing and wounding of hundreds of worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque clearly shows that Jews are Jews and that their hate for Muslims is intense and their resentment of God and his messenger is ever deepening. This should have been an eye opener for the heedless and fools who are bargaining Palestine away, giving it up chunk by chunk, city by city, and facility by facility.

The Bayt al-Maqdis Movement concluded its statement by saying: Relief is not far off and the outlines of victory are apparent on the horizon and God is great.

Commentaries Condemn 'Atrocious' Hebron Massacre

'Premeditated' Shooting Condemned

JN2502202194 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The volcanoes of blood have erupted. The woods of fire have blazed. And the pillars of the universe have been shaken by the gravity of Palestinian suffering and the deep Palestinian wound, which, whenever about to heal, opens up again to pour out hot blood [words indistinct] amid bloody sacrifices to wash away the shame of the world. [words indistinct] who abandoned God and humanity. May they be cursed. Having them uprooted from the land has become a duty. [words indistinct]. God is great. The Palestinian blood was spilled in the courtyard of the Ibrahimi Mosque while those who kneeled for their God in prayer [words indistinct]. Then, the Zionist hatred poured down on them in the ugliest form, the lowliest way, and [words indistinct].

In front of the Israeli Army and under the sponsorship of the Israeli Government, and in accordance with accurate planning, Zionist soldiers and settlers stormed the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. They volleyed their machine gun fire on the crowds of worshipers, killing dozens and wounding hundreds. Fifty-three were martyred instantly and hundreds were wounded. When people hurried to hospitals to (?rescue) their wounded, the Israeli Army besieged them, especially in the courtyard of the al-Ahli Hospital. Five others fell martyrs and dozens were wounded.

Afterward, rage broke out throughout Palestinian territory—in Gaza and Jerusalem, in Dayr al-Balah and Janin, in Khan Yunus and Ramallah, in Rafah and al-Birah, in Nabulus and Bethlehem, and in all towns, villages, and camps. There, Palestinian wrath broke out. The Zionist Army and the herds of settlers were lying in wait. They wounded dozens of people with their treacherous bullets.

God is great. God is great. This is a black Friday in Ramadan. This is an ugly massacre in Ramadan. This is an appalling crime in Ramadan. It was committed by the

Zionists—government and settlers, soldiers and terrorists; all are the same. They have committed this premeditated crime, knowing that [words indistinct] that their withdrawal from our territory is imminent and their days over our soil are numbered.

God is great. God is great. [words indistinct] the wound of the Ibrahim mosque tells the Zionists: You will inevitably leave. You will leave. [words indistinct] Long live Palestine. Glory to the martyrs. Glory to the resisting arms. God's victory is imminent.

Massacre: Sign of Israeli Intentions

LD2602103394 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 2200 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers! The massacre at the al-Ibrahimi mosque at dawn today opens the gates to major questions relating to the entire peace process. Are we proceeding along the correct path? Or is there something else that ought to be seen, studied, and paused at? This is because with such a terrible murder that our people were subjected to today, we cannot be assured of a future without guarantees that will insure that our murder will not become a daily annihilation.

Perhaps one of the most important and prominent questions concerns the settlers and the settlements, and whether a practical consolidation of any agreement could be realized if the settlers were living round the towns, villages, and the most important Palestinian housing concentrations? Everyone knows that the settlements that were built in the West Bank and Gaza since 1967 were established on military bases; the aim was that they should encircle the Palestinians, surrounding them with a military belt in which zealous settlers, who are trained in the use of arms and had served in the Israeli Army, live. Therefore, there is a gross malfunction in the negotiations that basically relate to the settlements and the settlers.

It is quite true that the Oslo and Washington agreements do not place the matter along these lines, but today's massacre gives a clear signal that there can be no solution with the presence of the settlers, and that the problem of the settlements should jump the list to become the priority over all other issues. This is because the Palestinians cannot have security while the settlers are there, and cannot feel safe while the settlements are present. Today's massacre is terrible and atrocious to the extent that it cannot be tolerated. It does not only give rise to questions, but raises the issue of protecting our people, and gives pause to the entire world—especially the two cosponsors, the Russians and the Americans—and the Security Council and the United Nations questions regarding the presence of an international force to protect our people—forces that separate this unarmed people and the settlers, who this morning fired the signal of the beginning, that was received by the Israeli Army who indulged with the settlers in the killing of the sons of our people.

We ought to understand the massacre, not only as an atrocious and mass crime, but as an early declaration of Israeli intentions regarding their belief in peace. Those who allow all those killings, and those who participate in such murders, cannot have a definite intention to strive for peace. This, now more than ever before, make our people and the PLO pause at our security and the guarantees that are being offered by the world for this security. The entire world has celebrated the accord of principles that was signed in Washington. What does the world say about this massacre and these killings? How can the world guarantee for us that such a massacre will not be repeated? How can this world punish the Israeli Government, Israeli Army, and Israeli settlers? The United Nations and the Security Council and all the states are now called upon to adopt a clear attitude.

The Security Council, which in recent years has become an establishment for intervention in the explosive spots in the world, should take practical resolutions and steps to protect the Palestinian blood. We will not list the issue under the title: Settler or settlers? The issue is not like that. The Israeli Army was not only responsible, but was the one who carried out the massacre. The Israeli prime minister, who at the same time is the well-known general who broke the Palestinians bones, is also totally and practically responsible. Matters will not be rectified in this way. Negotiations could not be continued, not only as a protest, but because of the bigger question of whether such negotiations and the results they may reach are worthwhile if the beginnings witness such terrible massacres? It is a black day in the history of our people. It is a bloody day, a day when they violated our sanctities in a holy month and killed and slaughtered; a day when blood smeared the walls of the al-Ibrahimi mosque while they went on in their celebration of our murder. How can murder lead to peace? We ought to stop and not proceed along the path of negotiation without being assured that the mowing down by bullets of innocent worshipers who were kneeling in prayers to their God would not be repeated, even if it was individual killing. How about their ugliness and racialism?

Then there is a last question that the massacre raises. Is the Arab situation in need of a bigger reconsideration in order to become more solid and firm? Is such solidarity still a costly demand, while the massacres fully expose the facts before the Arab world? Is there anyone who is safe from danger and threats while the life, security, and safety of the entire region are in a most critical situation?

Crime Puts Talks at 'Serious Crossroad'

JN2702132394 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers: There is no doubt that the hideous crime perpetrated by a clique of Zionist settlers, in collaboration with Israeli military commanders, against our people in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron is a natural outcome of the continuation of occupation and the continuation of genocide against our steadfast people in the occupied homeland. Within this context, the crime puts the peace process at a serious crossroad. This requires urgent measures to uproot its causes.

The ugly crime—in which many martyrs and injured fell at the hands of the herds of settlers who enjoy official Israeli protection and support—shows that peace will remain fragile as long as the settlements are still there and as long as the herds of settlers do whatever they want, carry out systematic killing against our people, and encroach on their sanctities in front of the international community which is turning a deaf ear to its own calls on human rights and liquidation of colonialism.

The crime, which has shaken the conscience of official and popular world public opinion, [break in transmission for 3 seconds] just denunciation, condemnation, and regret. It is a warning to all those who are involved in the peace process to review their stands and prove their credibility toward the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights to their land and homeland.

What took place in the Ibrahimi Mosque was not an accident, but an organized crime for which the Israeli leadership—which is still alleging that it is concerned about security and peace in the region—is responsible. It is an ugly crime in which the Palestinian blood was shed to put everyone to the test, particularly the United States in its capacity as the main sponsor of the peace process. The crime has dealt a severe blow to this process and warns of dangers whose future dimensions cannot be predicted.

The Ibrahimi Mosque crime shows the consequences of not providing international protection for the Palestinian people under the yoke of occupation. This issue does not tolerate any indifference or postponement under the pretext of giving the Israeli authorities enough time to look into the matter. Experiments showed that the Israeli authorities only aim at repressing and annihilating the Palestinians. They are far away from the truth regarding their claims to provide them with security and safety. Colonialists are only concerned about their own security, entrenching their occupation of land, annihilating its people.

It is time for the international community, particularly the Security Council, to look into the bare facts and take urgent measures to provide international protection for the Palestinian people. It is also time for the United States—if it is really interested in rendering the peace process a success—to practice its influence on the Isareli leadership to bring it to the right path. The Palestinian people have made great sacrifices, but they never weakened. Palestinian blood was never cheap and will never be so.

Palestinians Urged To Expel Occupation

JN2702210894 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] O our heroic Palestinian people, o brothers of the martyrs of the holy Ibrahimi Mosque, o their sons and beloved ones, o their relatives, o brave men of the giant intifadah, o brave Palestinians in all arenas of struggle, confrontation, clash, and conflict: It was our blood that was shed treacherously in the houses of God. It calls you, your unity and cohesion, your national identity, your national affiliation, your awareness and understanding and it urges you to rise up as one man to achieve the great goal of expelling the hateful Zionist occupation and its dark age from our country so our people can enjoy freedom and independence.

Let us all chant our historic slogan: "All rifles should be directed against the enemy, and all efforts and energies should be mobilized to fight the enemy, which is seeking to destroy our life and future."

Let each one act from his position to confront the army's occupation and the hordes of its settlers. Let a new wave of our brave intifadah move in one national voice and one combat spirit. This time is no longer one for differing slogans and speeches. Rather, it is one for a unified national action, which allows only for different actions.

Yes, this is a time for a unified national action and this is a time for a national unity to protect the lives of our people and bring double retaliation to the murderers, the hordes of the Zionist settlers, and the occupation army and authorities that protect these murderers. Let us work in the arenas of struggle, conflict, and confrontation as one unified rank and let us all chant in one voice: Either freedom and independence or fighting. Long live Palestine free, Arab, and Palestinian.

Egypt

President, Foreign Minister React to Hebron Killings

Mubarak Expresses 'Deep Concern'

NC2502223794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2215 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has expressed his deep concern and condemnation of the horrible incidents that occurred at the Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn today. He said the president is following up on the details and developments, as well as the contacts made at the United Nations level and in the various world capitals. He added that the president gave instructions to support the convening of a UN Security Council meeting and stressed the need to take the necessary measures to protect the Palestinians and maintain their security.

The foreign minister added that the president telephoned Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat this evening and expressed his condolences over the martyrs of the painful incident. The president also consulted with 'Arafat on the steps to be taken.

President Mubarak received a message from U.S. President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, and expressed his deep concern at the threats to which the Palestinians are being subjected. During these contacts, the president stressed the need to take the necessary measures to avoid a recurrence of such an incident in the future, for preventing the settlers and extremists from threatening and terrifying the Palestinian citizens, and for taking this into consideration during the talks on the Palestinian-Israeli track, which basically aim to restore the rights of the Palestinian people, their land, and their security.

Clinton Calls Mubarak

NC2702063494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] U.S. President Clinton telephoned President Husni Mubarak after midnight last night. President Mubarak affirmed during the conversation Egypt's condemnation and concern over the heinous crime, the victims of which were innocent Palestinians.

President Clinton also condemned the crime committed against the sons of the Palestinian people. President Mubarak discussed with the U.S. President during the telephone conversation the reactions to the incident on the Arab and international levels and the necessary measures that need to be taken to preserve the rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories to have protection and security for their lives and property.

After that, President Mubarak telephoned Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat. He also telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

Musa Briefs Security Council

NC2602172694 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1411 GMT 26 Feb 94

[News conference by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa with an unidentified correspondent in Cairo on 26 February—recorded]

[Text] [Musa] It is an inexcusable criminal act. It is the occupying authority's responsibility to protect the citizens under occupation as provided by the Geneva Conventions, particularly the Fourth Convention, and international law. Consequently its responsibility is clear in this case and cannot be shirked.

[Correspondent] We have already denounced the incident. Yet, considering its gravity, are practical steps being taken?

[Musa] Discussions are underway, no, not discussions. Contacts and consultations are underway in New York in connection with the adoption of a resolution. We believe that the UN Security Council should adopt a resolution, not a mere statement. Some parties want only a statement. We want the Security Council to meet and issue a resolution. The instructions that we sent to New York spell this out. This is our position and I clarified this to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when I telephoned him a short time ago to discuss the affair. What is important is that the Security Council should adopt a clear resolution on the matter. Second, the Palestinian citizens' security must be protected versus this criminality, this insanity, that the settlers and extremists show in the occupied territories, for example the criminal Kakh movement. Protecting the Palestinians is very important; this is the number one priority to prevent a recurrence of such incidents. The ongoing negotiations are supposed to enable us to achieve Palestinian self- determination, establish Palestinian autonomy, move from square one to more advanced positions, and reach a solution to the Palestinian problem. We cannot think that it is a solution to suspend the negotiations. We act as if we harm Israel when we do this. No, we must adopt such measures that will benefit us, including first protecting the Palestinians in the occupied territories and second adopting measures that will take us closer to a solution.

[Correspondent] Does this incident, or rather catastrophe, in the Ibrahimi Mosque negatively influence the peace process?

[Musa] This incident is undoubtedly bound to influence the peace process negatively. Its recurrence might kill the process entirely.

[Correspondent] Whom has Egypt's contacted so far?

[Musa] It has contacted everyone. Yesterday I issued a statement and the president telephoned Yasir 'Arafat and received a message from Clinton and a telephone call from Rabin. Christopher called me on the telephone yesterday and I called him today about this issue. In addition, we have contacted our delegation to the United Nations in connection with the Security Council meeting.

[Correspondent] Minister, will this incident make the Palestinians demand a review of the status of the settlements in Gaza and Jericho?

[Musa] The presence of the settlements and settlers in this way clearly causes grievous harm.

[Correspondent] They are time bombs.

[Musa] It is evident that grievous harm is being caused by the settlements and settlers to the peace operation and the Palestinian citizens' security. Our position remains clear on this: The settlement policy is an erroneous one that contradicts international law. These settlers, particularly the extremists such as the Kakh members, must be first disarmed and then prevented from harassing the Palestinians.

Other Events Related to Hebron Attack Noted

Envoy to Israel Recalled

NC2602133294 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The Egyptian Foreign Ministry has decided to recall its ambassador from Israel for consultations following the Israeli massacre. Reports say that Egypt, the Palestinians, and the Israelis are holding exchanges aiming to find an acceptable response to the massacre.

Today, a large number of the Israeli diplomatic mission's personnel left Cairo as part of the security precautions adopted by the Israelis in Egypt for fear of reprisals to the massacre.

Airport Placed on Alert

NC2602193594 Cairo MENA in English 1900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, Feb 26 (MENA)—Cairo International Airport announced a state of alert today in anticipation of any terrorist actions against foreigners and Israelis in retaliation of the Hebron Mosque massacre which took place yesterday.

A security source said security measures will be tightened to protect tourist groups particularly those coming from or going to Tel Aviv. The Israeli El-Al Airlines have not canceled any of its scheduled flights to and from Cairo.

Security 'Tightened' Around Israeli Interests

NC2702132894 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] According to Egyptian security sources, security organs have tightened security around Israeli interests in Cairo, as a precaution against any eventuality. The same sources say that Israeli tourists have been advised not to go to Egypt for the time being.

Islamic Group Orders Members To Escalate Attacks

NC2702071994 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The Islamic Group in Egypt has ordered its members to escalate their attacks to revenge the victims of the Hebron massacre. It described Egyptian President Husni Mubarak as the biggest agent of Zionism in the region.

'Nearly 10,000' Students Protest Attack on 26 Feb

NC2602163794 Paris AFP in English 1519 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, Feb 26 (AFP)—Nearly 10,000 Egyptian university students on Saturday denounced "Zionism" and demanded revenge for the massacre of 52 Muslim worshipers at a mosque in the Israeli- occupied West Bank.

The demonstrators, heeding a call by the Muslim fundamentalist-dominated student union at Cairo University, waved black flags and carried coffins draped in Palestinian flags.

Leaflets distributed by demonstrators called for "holy war" in support of the Palestinians, and said the "Muslim holy places in Palestine should be put under the protection of a fundamentalist state, such as Jordan."

They urged Egypt, the only Arab country to have a peace treaty with Israel, to break diplomatic relations with the Jewish state.

The campus was ringed by security forces to prevent any violence directed at the Israeli Embassy, only two kilometers (1.2 miles) away.

The Israeli Army said a lone settler, Barukh Goldstein, carried out the slaughter at the mosque in the West Bank town of Hebron Friday.

Protests Continue 27 Feb

NC2702171694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—Cairo University students today continued their protests of the massacre in the Hebron Mosque, which left more than 60 Palestinians martyred and several others wounded at the hands of the terrorist Israeli groups.

More than 1,000 students organized a peaceful demonstration in which they shouted slogans denouncing the sinful aggression against the unarmed citizens and raised anti-Israeli signs.

Meanwhile, Cairo University has decided to cancel two Arabic musical concerts scheduled for today and to postpone until 3 March a folk dance show by Rida Group, in solidarity with the families of the Palestinian martyrs and as an expression of denunciation for this appalling crime.

At Al-Azhar University students demonstrated today for half an hour while the opening session of an international competition on the Koran was held on campus. The students shouted slogans hostile to the Israeli practices and denounced the attack on worshipers at the Hebron Mosque early Friday. The students appealed to Arab and Islamic states to adopt a firm stance against the Israeli violations.

Consultative Council Condemns Hebron Attack

NC2602155994 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] During its meeting this morning under the chairmanship of Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi, the Consultative Council condemned the terrorist attack against Palestinian worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the West Bank yesterday.

Dr. Muhammad Zaki Abu-'Amir, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs, described the incident as hideous and involved Palestinian brothers praying at the Ibrahimi Mosque. He affirmed that the Egyptian leadership has very strongly condemned this painful incident.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has also announced that President Husni Mubarak was extremely disturbed by this incident and followed it up closely. He affirmed that the government condemns this crime and is closely following the situation to adopt what would be consistent with the public interest. He explained the importance of emphasizing that the Palestinians' security is a matter that must be given every consideration. He said all measures must be adopted to prevent a repetition of such incidents and to keep the future of peace from falling into the hands of the extremists and terrorists.

Awqaf Minister Comments

NC2602115894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1057 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Al-Zaqaziq, 26 Feb (MENA)—Awqaf Minister Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub has condemned the massacre that occurred during the dawn prayers yesterday in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, West Bank. He called for placing the Jerusalem and the al-Aqsa Mosque issues on the list of urgent and essential issues that require a speedy solution. He appealed to the Islamic world, which is passing through one of its worst stages, particularly in Afghanistan and Somalia, to close ranks and stand up to preserve its standing and prestige. This statement was made at a popular rally held in the village of al-Sama'inah in Faqus District in al-Sharqiyah Governorate last evening. He noted that the goal of his tours of Egyptian governorates is to explain the facts to the people and to enlighten them about the dangers facing Egypt and threatening its security and stability. He noted that Egypt's stability ensures the stability of the Arab world, as Egypt is the safeguard of security and peace of the Islamic world.

Parliamentary Committee Head Comments on Event

NC2502224594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Mufid Shihab, chairman of the People's Assembly's Arab and Foreign Relations and National Security Committee, has called an emergency meeting of the committee tomorrow, Saturday, to discuss the massacres Israeli settlers committed against the Palestinians, how to address the issue, and the impact it will have on the regional peace process.

In exclusive statements to MENA, Dr. Shihab said the massacre was criminal and barbaric and should be strongly condemned by all peace loving powers. He pointed to the danger of maintaining Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, adding that Israel should seriously contemplate the removal of these settlements from the Palestinian territories if we want peace and security to be real and to last.

Dr. Shihab held Israel fully responsible for the massacre, since the 1949 Geneva agreements give the occupying state the authority to run and organize utilities in the occupied territories. These agreements hold the occupying state solely responsible for protecting the lives and safety of all the residents of these territories, he said, adding: Hence, Israel has not honored these commitments.

He remarked that this calls for serious thinking about imposing international protection on the territories and their residents. This protection should be approved by the international community and the concerned institutions, primarily the UN Security Council. He emphasized that this international protection should be provided to the Palestinians on their lands, since it has been proven that the Israeli army and administration are incapable of providing protection to them, adding that this is important if we want the peace negotiations to continue.

Dr. Shihab voiced his support for Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's call for a Security Council meeting to discuss this issue. He called on the Council to intervene quickly and decisively and discuss this incident and its consequences and to discuss the setting up of the necessary guarantees to protect the security of Palestinian citizens from the violent practices of the Israeli settlers and the Israeli forces' lack of seriousness in confronting these violent practices.

He added that it is painful to see the Israeli forces confronting the unarmed demonstrators who wanted to denounce this massacre and to see them killing more demonstrators instead of seriously acting to stop the Israeli settlers' criminal acts.

Other Party Officials React

NC2502174894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Religious, political, and intellectual people in Egypt have condemned the heinous massacre perpetrated by some Israeli settlers at dawn this morning against a group of Palestinian worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque, killing scores of people and injuring hundreds.

In statements to MENA, they noted that this barbaric and criminal act could hamper international efforts currently being made to establish peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

They called on the international community to shoulder its full responsibility toward this heinous crime and punish Israel for it. They held Israel responsible for the incident for not taking the necessary security precautions that could have prevented this crime.

Grand Imam of al-Azhar Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq described this incident as ugly, criminal, and painful since the perpetrators did not take into consideration the fact that the worshipers were standing in the hands of God, performing their duties for God at such an early hour of the morning. These evil men, who honor no truce or covenant, harvested the worshipers with their weapons, killing and injuring those people who were in God's hands.

He said this incident reveals the bestiality, absence of humanity, and deviation from the spirit of religion and emotion that watches over people who place themselves in the hands of God.

He added that this is a grave crime for which Israel should be made answerable internationally. The families and guardians of the martyrs should take Israel to account. Those involved in the peace process should also take this crime into consideration.

Dr. Mustafa al-Sa'id, chairman of the People's Assembly's Economic Committee, said that this incident confirms that the cause of peace has not yet reached the mentality of the ordinary Israeli, who still thinks he can continue his occupation of territory and evacuating its inhabitants through violence and terrorism which are practiced against the Arabs in the occupied territories. He added that this was the policy pursued by the Israelis during the first stages of establishing the so-called State of Israel.

He noted that such an incident underlines the need for the Arab nation to be aware of what is happening in the region now and to take whatever step is necessary to make Israel understand that these criminal and terrorist actions impede the peace efforts that the Israelis claim to welcome.

He said that this painful incident is no less grave than the Serbs' crimes against the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He deeply regretted Western society's silence over the repeated violations of human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the occupied Arab territories.

Kahlid Muhyi-al-Din, National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party leader, described the crime as an ugly one and asked why people who were kneeling in prayer and not doing anything to harm Israeli settlers were shot at. He said that this incident shows that keeping the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories threatens the process to establish peace and destroys any attempt to establish any peaceful coexistence.

Liberals Party leader Mustafa Kamil Murad stressed that this incident indicates the increase in the number of extremist Israeli elements whose extremism reaches the level of criminality, bloodshed, and the violation of God's houses. He said that shooting at people in prayer is unprecedented anywhere except in Israel. He noted that this incident will have bad consequences on the progress of the peace negotiations between Israel and the PLO. He called for an international investigation into this incident, condemnation of it, and international punishment for it.

The Wafd Party Secretary Yasin Siraj al-Din said that this incident confirms the barbarism of the Israelis and their ability to challenge the world public. He noted that the incident is aimed against all heavenly principles, including Islam and Christianity. He said that the incident is bound to impede all the current efforts to establish peace in the region in general and the Gaza-Jericho Accord between Israel and the PLO in particular. He called for halting all cooperation or normalization between the Arabs and Israelis.

Siraj al-Din stressed the need to convene an emergency Arab summit to be attended by kings and presidents to put an end to these repeated criminal Israeli practices. He said if this is unachievable, the summit must be held at the level of heads of government to end such criminal acts effectively.

Ahmad Hamrush, chairman of the Egyptian Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, said that this massacre is added to the list of massacres committed by the Israeli extremists, starting with the massacre in Dayr Yasin in 1947, and including the Sabra and Shatila [in Beirut] massacres, and now the Hebron massacre. Today's massacre comes at a delicate time when the Israeli and Palestinian peoples are joining efforts to achieve peace in the region.

Hamrush stressed that these extremist terrorist elements that perpetrated this bestial massacre aim to halt the peace process, to incite hatred between the Arabs and Jews, and to continue the tension and wars that have engulfed the region for 50 years. He said Rabin should be held responsible for this massacre, as he continues to procrastinate in the implementation of the agreements reached between the Israeli Government and the PLO.

Continuing his statement, Hamrush said: I hope this incident would not thwart the peaceful settlement and that we will not give the Israeli extremists and terrorists the chance to have the final word concerning the nations' fate. He added: We are passing through a stage that requires self-restraint and recourse to logic and rationalism to confront this tragedy so that we can avert its consequences and continue the peace process. [passage omitted]

Dailies, Commentaries React to Hebron 'Massacre'

NC2602070994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Cairo dailies in their 26 February editions highlight the horrendous crime a Jewish settler committed in the city of Hebron in the occupied West Bank. The dailies dedicate their front page headlines to reports on the tragedy.

Draped in black, AKHBAR AL-YAWM's headline says "Massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque."

In its commentary, the paper says that the goal of the Israeli extremists was to deal a fatal blow to peace. It adds that this massacre should not pass unnoticed; we should pause long over it to ask Israel and the world many questions that need answering: What is meant by preserving security in the Middle East region? Is it Israel's security alone? Where is the Palestinians' security? And is it reasonable to leave the destiny of the honorable Jerusalem in the hands of Israeli extremists who determine who enters it and who gets out, who lives and who dies?

AKHBAR AL-YAWM says that every Muslim and Christian in the world must strongly condemn this barbaric crime. The world should not content itself with condemnations; it should seek ways to return holy places to their owners instead of leaving them in the hands of those who cannot protect them and who let armed extremists and crazy persons kill innocent people at dawn, AKHBAR AL-YAWM says.

In its editorial, AL-AHRAM says this dreadful massacre is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the Israeli Government. It is not possible to claim that a crazy settler committed it of his own accord.

The paper notes that there are precedents that fall into the same category. Israel claimed that the person who set fire to the al- Aqsa Mosque before was mentally unstable, AL-AHRAM says, adding that a number of Palestinian laborers working in Israel were killed a few years back and the Israeli authorities claimed that the murderer was mentally unstable.

The paper asks if Palestinian blood has become so cheap that dozens of fasting Palestinians should be killed as they performed dawn prayers at the Ibrahimi Mosque. Is it reasonable that the Israeli Government's only reaction should be just a statement appealing to Palestinians not to take revenge, the paper asks.

AL-AHRAM affirms that Egypt will take a clear-cut stand when the UN Security Council considers this barbaric aggression.

AL-JUMHURIYAH's main headline says "The Martyrdom of 61 Palestinians in the Ibrahimi Mosque."

The paper highlights Egypt's condemnation of this heinous massacre and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's call for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to take the proper measures to protect the Palestinian people.

In its editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH writes that this massacre will burden the international community with the big responsibility of insuring security for the Palestinian people, who suffer daily as a result of the Israeli occupation practices.

The paper adds that this massacre once again emphasizes the need to use fair logic, observe human rights, and implement the international resolutions that call for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and for protecting the Palestinians' right to confront the unheeding, continuous Israeli oppression that goes on with the support and encouragement of the United States, which is keen to supply the Israeli Army with the most sophisticated weapons.

AL-AHRAM Urges Security for Palestinians

NC2702071294 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0540 GMT 27 Feb 94

[From the press review]

[Text] On the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, the newspaper AL-AHRAM writes in its editorial: The final round of these talks ended last Wednesday, having made important progress regarding formulating the final agreement. All indications showed that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho was to begin on the date which the two sides had agreed on. This deadline was set for 13 April.

However, everything changed suddenly after the horrific Hebron massacre. The venue of the negotiations stopped being of any consequence, be it Washington, Cairo, or Taba where Egypt was providing all possible support for the progress of the talks. What is important now is that the talks must focus on providing international protection for the Palestinian people and on taking the necessary measures to guarantee that the Israeli aggressors do not attack the peace-loving Palestinian people.

Commentary Assesses Impact of Event

NC2602180194 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "How Long Will the World Remain a Spectator Vis-a-Vis the Palestinian People?"]

[Text] How long will the world community silently watch the Palestinian people being exterminated, not only in the streets and the refugee camps but also inside the mosques in an unprecedented brutal way?

Where are the international human rights organizations whose task is to protect people everywhere?

When will the world act to protect the Palestinians inside the occupied territories?

What is the fate of the Middle East peace process?

Many questions rise in the minds of observers and political analysts everywhere in the wake of the ugly massacre perpetrated by a Jewish settler inside the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron on the West Bank at dawn yesterday. The massacre has dismayed Muslims everywhere and reminded them of the burning of the al-Aqsa Mosque. It has dismayed the whole world with them. Peace loving forces in Israel have strongly condemned the act.

We believe that this massacre is not part of the daily, mutual Palestinian Israeli violence and killings but a premeditated crime with serious implications, not merely because of its hideousness, the method in which it was carried out at this particular time, and the number of martyrs and wounded who fell in it, but because it raises numerous doubts about the Israeli authorities' ability to provide security for the Palestinian people, whose land is under occupation. At the same time, the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations have been stumbling for months as a result of Israeli security claims.

Egypt strongly condemns this criminal action and urges the world community to act promptly to protect the Palestinian people as Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa demanded yesterday.

We also believe that this hideous massacre raises several important points. First, any discussion of security requirements in the framework of the current Palestinian-Israeli negotiations must focus primarily on providing security not for the Israelis, as the Israeli delegation is demanding, but for the Palestinians. The danger threatens only the unarmed Palestinians who demand to live free on their national soil like all other nations. Thus Israel's security pretext totally collapses.

Second, keeping the settlements inside the Palestinian territories is an issue that comes forcefully to the fore in the negotiations and requires a decisive solution. Peace will not come as long as the settlements stay and as long as their residents carry weapons with permission from the authorities and fire indiscriminately and with impunity on civilian women, children, and old people, perpetrating ugly massacres against them as happened at dawn yesterday while worshipers were praying in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

Third, this terrible crime has proven the need to expedite the peace moves, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track, on the grounds that the Palestinian issue is at the core of the Middle East conflict. The Declaration of Principles, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, and the Cairo Agreement must be implemented so that the Israeli Government can demonstrate its sincere intentions to establish a just peace that will serve the good of all the nations in the Arab region. We believe that it is now Israel's responsibility to carry this out because the PLO has shown the utmost flexibility for the sake of peace.

Fourth, any Israeli delay or procrastination is bound to encourage extremists on both sides to carry out lethal strikes with the aim of burying the peace. Delay will open the door wide for mutual violence. On the same note, the Jewish settlers and the Israeli forces must be banned from opening fire in such an insane manner on an unarmed population whose land was occupied by force.

Fifth, this criminal incident lays a great and direct responsibility on the shoulders of the two peace sponsors, particularly U.S. President Bill Clinton, and Europe, whose peace is intimately linked with the Middle East's security and peace. Their reactions must not be limited to denunciations and expressions of sorrow. The Palestinian people, and all the world's free peoples, are waiting for a positive reaction. Nor is Sarajevo's incident far from the mind.

Any delay on the part of the Israeli Government to adopt deterrent measures against the perpetrators of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre, any failure to halt the Jewish settlers' criminal actions, and a slow reaction by the world community to protect the Palestinians will have serious negative repercussions, not only for the peace process but for the security of the Israeli people themselves. It is time the Israelis learned that a just peace is the only way to ensure their security and protection.

Commentary: Shooting Sounded 'Sinister' Alarm

NC2502152894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "Egypt Strongly Denounces the Israeli Massacre of Palestinians"]

[Text] The massacre by Israeli settlers of Palestinians attending the dawn prayers at the Ibrahimi mosque in holy Jerusalem [placename as heard], with a death toll of 53, sounded a sinister alarm. The massacre may harm the Palestinian Israeli peace talks. It illustrates the need to place the status of holy Jerusalem on the agenda of the Palestinian-Israeli talks.

The horrendous slaughter of Palestinian worshippers led the Israelis to seal off the West Bank and Gaza and sent angry Palestinians marching into the streets. Ironically, more Palestinians were shot and killed by the Israeli army trying to quell Palestinian demonstrations.

The shocking incident in which hundreds of worshipers were injured brought a cascade of protests from international circles, with many observers expressing fears that the slaughter, and the resulting anger among the Palestinians, would undercut peace efforts in the region. The Israeli Government ought to take all the blame for the attack on Palestinian worshippers in the Ibrahimi mosque.

Egypt, a country that has a historic role in the region and that has been actively involved in the peace process, has strongly denounced the massacre in Hebron on the West Bank.

Commenting on the atrocity, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stressed the need to combat terrorism, a scourge that has spread in numerous societies of variant religions and political doctrines. Musa said the massacre underscores the need to safeguard Palestinian, not just Israeli, security. Security claims, he said, are not the exclusive prerogative of Israel. Musa said that in view of the incident's ugliness and its grave implications for the peace process in the Middle East, Egypt will take part in any UN Security Council meeting convened at the request of Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat. 'Arafat has called for immediate international action to protect the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

It seems that the urgency of the Palestinian, Arab, and international reaction has alerted the Israeli Government to the hideousness of the carnage. A senior Israeli official made a statement saying that the Israeli settlers would be wrong to think that such acts could obstruct the peace talks. Indeed, he said, the Israeli Government has no option but to accelerate the peace process, even if this involves further concessions to the Palestinian side.

The incident demonstrates the drawbacks of Israel's policy on settlements. The incident should make Israel carefully consider removing the Israeli settlements from the Palestinian territories so that the peace process might remain on the right track.

What particularly distressed the international community is that such atrocities inflicted by the Israelis on the Palestinians may lead sections of the Palestinian community to lose interest in talks with the Israelis under the current conditions, that is, as long as Israeli settlements and settlers are part of the deal.

To conclude, let us state that Egypt, eager to maintain the peace momentum in the region, is holding intensive contacts with various sides to preserve a climate conducive to talks and eventually to peace in the region.

Musa Laments 27 Feb Beirut Church Bombing

NC2802122994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has expressed his regret at the attack against a Maronite church in Beirut yesterday. It is a regrettable and sad incident and we hope Lebanon will not be subjected once again to that wave of assaults and disturbances, he said.

Musa expressed Egypt's condolences to the victims of that painful incident.

Bahrain

Foreign Ministry: Hebron Incident 'Reprehensible'

JN2602152194 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1425 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Manama, 26 Feb (WAKH)—The State of Bahrain has strongly condemned and denounced the reprehensible crime and odious massacre the Zionist settlers have committed against Palestinian citizens who were performing dawn prayers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in the occupied West Bank, as a result of which scores were martyred and hundreds were wounded.

A responsible source at the Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs has described this massacre as a terrorist act and held the Israeli Government and its security organs fully responsible for the terrorist acts these terrorist settlers carry out, which violate all international laws, norms, and charters and endanger the comprehensive, just, and lasting peace process in the region.

The source called on the international community and the UN Security Council, particularly its permanent members, to fully assume their responsibilities toward this act by not just denouncing and condemning it but by taking measures to protect the Palestinian people and secure their legitimate right to the establishment of their independent state on their national soil.

Kuwait

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Comments on Hebron Incident

LD2502223994 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 2145 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Kuwait, 25 Feb (KUNA)—Kuwait tonight denounced the hideous slaughter perpetrated by the Zionists in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Hebron which led to the falling of scores of Palestinian martyrs and more than 200 injured.

A spokesman for the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry told KUNA that this horrendous crime had moved the human feelings and conscience in Kuwait by its hideous and savage nature, and that denunciation is not enough to condemn this deliberate slaughter. He said that the Security Council and the superpowers in it are required more than ever before to take decisive and firm measures to protect the Palestinian people against such concocted crimes.

He added that by its protection of the settlements in the heart of the occupied Arab areas, the Israeli Government bears legal, material, and moral responsibility for this massacre. He said that while offering its sincerest condolences to the relatives of the martyrs and the Palestinian people, Kuwait believes that more international efforts should be made to secure the full Palestinian rights for setting up their own state on their national territory, because this is the sure guarantee for a safe future for them.

Bomb Explodes at Cinema in Khaytan 28 Feb

LD2802114094 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1048 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Kuwait, 28 Feb—A security source at the Interior Ministry announced here this morning that a bomb has exploded at the entrance of Granada cinema in Khaytan area west of the city of Kuwait.

In a statement received by KUNA the source explained that "the explosion resulted in the injury of two people and smashed glass in the building."

The source pointed out that the competent authorities in the Interior Ministry have initiated investigation to learn the circumstances that led to the incident.

The source appealed to whoever has any information about the incident to immediately contact the nearest police station to give information to facilitate the task of the security apparatus in identifying the perpetrators.

The security source, at the end of its statement, expressed its indignation at this criminal act, which has targeted the lives of the innocent. The source expressed the hope that the security services, with the cooperation of the citizens and those who were at the cinema, would be able to apprehend the perpetrator as quickly as possible.

Oman

Foreign Ministry Denounces Hebron as 'Heinous Crime'

LD2602193594 Riyadh SPA in English 1922 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Muscat, Feb 26, SPA—The Sultanate of Oman has condemned the massacre perpetrated by Israeli settlers inside the al-Ibrahimi Mosque.

The OMANI NEWS AGENCY quoted an official Foreign Ministry spokesman as describing this terrorist act as a heinous crime and holding the Israeli Government responsible for it.

Oman urged that this act would not affect the peace process in the Middle East as the only way out of the whirlpool of violence engulfing the region.

Qatar

Foreign Minister Comments on Hebron, Peace Process

JN2602084194 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Doha, 25 Feb (WAKH)—The State of Qatar has condemned today's ugly massacre against worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque, terming it a terrorist act threatening the Palestinian citizens who are entitled to live on their land and enjoy what other citizens enjoy in their country.

In a press statement here this evening, Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani expressed his great displeasure at the massacre, hoping that it will not affect the peace process.

Saudi Arabia

'Responsible Source:' Attack Bore Marks of 'Extremism'

LD2502183694 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1750 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Riyadh, 25 Feb—The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has condemned the massacre perpetrated at dawn today by Israeli settlers against Palestinians who were praying in the mosque of Abraham in Hebron. This massacre resulted in the deaths of dozens of people and the wounding of hundreds.

In a statement today to SPA, a responsible source expressed his condemnation and censure of this regrettable event, which bore the marks of extremism, fanaticism, and lack of respect for human rights on the part of the Israelis.

The source laid responsibility for this massacre on the Israeli Government because of its disregard for the crimes committed by Israeli settlers against unarmed Palestinians. He called on the international community to face up to its responsibility of providing protection for the Palestinians, who are suffering under the Israeli occupation, and of stopping these serious crimes and massacres against them.

In conclusion the statement indicates that this abominable crime might have a negative effect on the peace process in the Middle East.

Reaction of Dailies Highlighted

LD2602140694 Riyadh SPA in English 1332 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Riyadh, Feb 26, SPA—The Saudi newspapers deplored today the massacre of Palestinian worshippers at Ibrahim mosque yesterday.

Jeddah-based AL-MADINAH said the massacre was a result of the continuation of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

The paper said the crime has provided a clear evidence that the proposed peace initiatives will never be realized.

It would be better for those who raise their voices speaking about human rights to get acquainted of the fact that no peaceful settlement will never [as received] be realized without putting an end to the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and departure of the Jewish settlers.

'UKAZ, which is also published in Jeddah, said the massacre at Ibrahim mosque has reflected the criminal plots hatched by the Zionist quarters against the Palestinians.

It is not a mere crime committed by one person as the Israeli authorities have been alleging, but is a well-arranged crime prepared by a number of culprits, said the daily.

By alleging that the criminal committed suicide Israel is trying to distract attention from the vicious bloody crime, said the daily.

The daily held Israel responsible of all massacres committed in the occupied Palestinian territories.

It also condemned shooting of the Palestinians who gathered at the hospital to donate with their blood to the injured people as well as shooting of the Palestinian demonstrators who shouted to express their anger over the bloody incident.

This massacre was not the first of its kind and will never be the final one, said the daily.

For its part Riyadh-based AL-JAZIRAH said overlooking of such crime will never be tolerated or accepted.

The Israeli authorities should be held responsible for the massacre of the worshippers at Ibrahim mosque yesterday, said the daily.

The paper criticized the Western information media which used to justify the Israeli acts against the Palestinians and the Arabs.

When the Zionists commit crimes voices are always raised calling for self-restraint and rationalization, added the daily.

United Arab Emirates

'Responsible Source' Blames Israel for Hebron Event

JN2602083794 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0510 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 25 Feb (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates has strongly condemned the heinous, ugly crime perpetrated by the Zionist settlers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn today.

A responsible source at the UAE Foreign Ministry held Israel fully responsible for this massacre because it has continued to arm them and overlook their repeated crimes and attacks on the defenseless Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories.

In a statement disseminated by the EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY, the source said this massacre, which took place under the eyes of the Israeli occupation forces, proves beyond doubt the Israeli Government's collusion with the criminals.

The source called on the international community, headed by the Security Council and the big powers supporting the peace process, to undertake a serious and effective move that goes beyond condemnation and denunciation and to adopt tangible, decisive, and practical steps to protect the Palestinian city [as received].

Yemen

Ministry, 'Unofficial' Circles Urge End to Hebron Events

JN2502210394 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The Foreign Ministry and official and unofficial circles in Yemen have received with intense pain and indignation the news of the egregious crime perpetrated this morning by a member of the Zionist gangs in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron against innocent worshippers, of whom over 60 were killed and 300 wounded.

The Foreign Ministry appeals to the international community to act to halt such terrorist acts, and condemns the Zionist authorities for obstructing the transfer of the wounded to hosptials. The Foreign Ministry calls on the community of nations to press for bringing pressure to bear in the interest of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Al-Sahhaf Condemns 'Zionist Crime,' Double Standards

JN2602150294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1258 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf has strongly condemned the ugly crime the Zionist criminals committed against the sons of the Palestinian people while they were performing prayer at the Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn yesterday.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, the minister said this appalling crime is a glaring example of racist Zionist policy and how the United States and its Western allies react to such acts.

He said the United States and its Western allies use the most violent means of interference in response to their supporters' allegations about so-called human rights in one country or another. But when large numbers of Palestinians are publicly killed in a brutal and dirty manner, all that Washington, London, and the other Western capitals offer is words.

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said: The way the United States and some Western states reacted to this crime, which is part of the genocide that the Palestinian people have been subjected to since the partition and consequent usurpation of Palestine, is evidence of the double standards the United States and its Western allies follow in their dealings with world issues. We have always noted these double standards. Wherever the United States and its Western allies want to impose their political will and their economic interests, they use the UN Security Council and international organizations, as well as direct force, to achieve their objectives. But when it has something to do with peoples' rights and protecting them against genocide, U.S. and Western reaction is confined to the shedding of crocodile tears, maneuvers, and deception.

Concluding his statement, the foreign minister said: The world peoples who love peace and justice and truly believe in human rights, the peoples who denounced this dirty Zionist crime against the people of Palestine, should denounce in the strongest way the stand of the United States and some of its Western allies on this crime. They should denounce their use of double standards toward all fair world and Arab issues, primarily the Palestine issue.

Assembly Condemns Hebron Deaths, 'Capitulatory' Accords

JN2602181194 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The National Assembly has strongly condemned Friday's ugly Zionist crime against our Palestinian Arab people.

In a statement, the assembly stressed that in the name of the Iraqi people, it denounces that terrorist, racist crime. It urged the international community, the United Nations, the Security Council, and the Arab League to assume their historic and human responsibilities in order to provide protection for the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories and to ensure their right to self-determination.

The assembly urged world humanitarian organizations to stand up against Zionist racism and terrorist practices in the occupied territory against the defenseless Palestinian people. It urged Arab people everywhere to close their ranks and forge a broad Arab front against defeatists, those running behind the U.S. mirage and spiteful dreams, and those anxiously seeking to join the capitulatory settlements that have led to further deterioration in the Arab situation.

Praising the heroic stand of the Palestinian revolutionaries everywhere, the assembly stressed that Arab unity can be achieved only through the full recognition of the Palestinian Arab people's rights to their territory and water, not through defeatism, retreat, and behind-the-scenes plans

Party Official: Coexistence With 'Zionists' Impossible

JN2602100494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, member of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and secretary general of the National Progressive and Patriotic Front [NPPF], has stressed that the Zionist massacre in which dozens of Palestinian worshipers were martyred and hundreds were wounded in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in the city of Hebron has exposed the true nature of the Zionist plotting against the Palestinian people as well as the Zionist attempts to liquidate them and destroy their history and civilization.

In a statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH published today, 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur said that this outrageous massacre shows the impossibility of coexistence between the Palestinian Arab people and the Zionists who usurped their land.

The NPPF secretary general called on the political forces and parties and human rights committees in the Arab homeland and the world to denounce and condemn this crime which the Zionist enemy would not have dared to perpetrate without the colonialist U.S. collusion with the Zionist enemy, and the continued U.S. support to enable it to carry out aggressions against the Palestine question, people, and civilization.

'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur hailed the glorious sacrifices of the Palestinian Arab people, and expressed pride in the righteous martyrs and victims of the criminal act which was perpetrated by the Zionists against Palestinian worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the blessed month of Ramadan.

He noted that the escalation of the intifadah in the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people's continued confrontation of the colonialist Zionist schemes inside and outside the occupied territories constitute the only way to achieve the Palestinian people's national and inalienable objectives, and not the capitulatory framework in which the Zionists and colonialists have found their defeated dreams of entrenching their occupation of Palestine.

Concluding his statement, the NPPF secretary general stressed the support of Iraq, the NPPF parties, and the Iraqi people, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn for the Palestinian Arab people's struggle to restore their national inalienable rights in their homeland.

Popular Forces Conference Head Condemns Hebron 'Crime'

JN2502182594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, secretary general of the Popular Arab Forces Conference, has condemned the abominable crime perpetrated by a gang of Zionist settlers this morning against Palestinian Muslims at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, he said this repulsive crime exemplifies the hatred felt by Zionists toward our Palestinian Arab people and confirms the impossibility of cohabitation with the invaders and killers who usurped Arab land and honor. He called for the intensification of the intifadah as the correct response to Zionist crimes and violations of Palestinian human rights. Hammudi urged dynamic Arab forces and the international community to condemn this appalling massacre and its imperialist backers, especially the U.S. Administration—the Zionist entity's strategic ally. The blood of innocent martyrs is an offering for the redemption of Palestine from the abomination of the racist, hateful Zionist occupation, Hammudi said.

Newspapers Comment on Killings at Hebron Mosque

AL-QADISIYAH, AL-'IRAQ, AL-JUMHURIYAH: 26 Feb

JN2602121894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Iraqi newspapers today stressed that the Zionists' crime in Hebron will continue to be a disgrace to the Zionist entity, America, and all the dwarfs of those who betray their people and nation. Victory is always for the people.

In their editorials, the papers denounced the heinous Zionist crime which was perpetrated by the fascist Zionists against Muslim worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the West Bank city of Hebron yesterday, Friday. The papers said that the dreadful Hebron massacre shows the treacherous fascist nature of the Zionist Movement and its plotting against the Arab nation and the Palestinian Arab people's entity.

The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH calls on the Arab and Muslim masses to rise up against the agent regimes, the Zionist entity, and all those who perpetrated and supported the Zionists' crime in Hebron, which defied the feelings of the Arabs and Muslims in their most sacred holy places and rites.

In its editorial under the headline "A Condemned Abominable Zionist Crime," the paper says: This criminal act proves that the Zionists are thirsty for the blood of Muslims and Arabs, and that they have always been seeking to kill and persecute them and to confiscate their right in Arab Palestine.

AL-QADISIYAH stresses that the Zionists and their masters must know that this brutal crime and similar despicable hostile acts perpetrated against Muslims in the occupied Arab territories will only strengthen their resolve, escalate their valiant intifadah against the repression of the Zionist entity, and will clearly expose those who are desperate for a settlement and those who pant after the mirage of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

The paper says: The odious Hebron massacre has exposed the treacherous fascist nature of the Zionist Movement and its plotting against the Arab nation and the Palestinian people's entity. It reminds us of the Zionists' massacres in Dayr Yasin, Bahr al-Baqar, Abu Za'bal, and elsewhere.

The paper explains that this dreadful Zionist crime proves the Zionist entity's insistence on ignoring the feelings of all Arabs and Muslims, confiscating the Palestinian Arab land, and annihilating the Palestinian people in a way that exposes Arab regimes that are linked with the foreigner as well as those who are desperately panting after capitulatory solutions of the settlement Arabs.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: The sons of Palestine are now bolstering their unity with the trench of the eternal Mother of Battles. At the same time, the facts of the Mother of Battles have clearly showed Iraq's ability to stand fast in the face of the Zionist-Atlantic-U.S. satan and its local agents and traitors. Iraq's steadfastness in the eternal Mother of Battles and the Palestinian people's intifadah will continue to be the torch which will dissipate Arab darkness and lead to the Arab nation's historic awakening.

The newspaper AL-'IRAQ stresses that what took place at the Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn on Friday, the 15th of Ramadan, the month of worship, faith, fasting, and piety, was a new Zionist crime and an abhorrent massacre to be added to the criminal enemy's record of ceaseless acts of killing, annihilation, and mass liquidation of the sons of the Palestinian people, which it has been carrying out since its establishment in Arab Palestine.

In its editorial, the paper says: This crime, which was perpetrated by the enemies of God and humanity, the murderer Zionists, has exposed the true nature of the Zionist enemy and its criminal scheme to annihilate the Palestinian people and to uproot them from their holy land through escalating the killing and pursuing of the Palestinian citizens by the occupation forces and settlers who are actually professional military men in civilian clothes, and who have been supplied with the same weapons used by the regular army personnel.

AL-'IRAQ adds: Those who scrutinize the enemy's negotiations record and its dirty and twisted methods, beginning with the Rhodes negotiations in 1948, passing through the Camp David Accords with al-Sadat, and ending with the series of meetings which were held in Norway, Switzerland, France, and Egypt, will emerge with one conclusion only; namely, that this treacherous fascist enemy does not believe in peace, will not recognize Arab rights, and has no intention to withdraw from a single inch of Palestine.

The paper stresses that the history of the Arab-Zionist conflict has proved that one cannot count on any solution no matter how capitulatory this person maybe and regardless of whether he is responsive to the Zionist avarice or not. This is because our enemy, as the statements of its officials show, beginning with Moshe Sharit [name as transliterated] and Ben-Gurion and ending with Yitzhaq Shamir and Yitzhaq Rabin, is simply committed to the Zionist dream.

The paper notes that the new crime will not affect the official U.S. and European stands, especially since the U.S. and Western media, particularly the ill-famed British BBC which, from the very beginning of the massacre, tried to play down the true number of martyrs and wounded, and to show that what has happened was only the the act of an individual Zionist settler.

Concluding its article, the paper stresses: We are very confident and certain that this odious massacre will only strengthen the determination of our brothers in the occupied territories to adhere to their sacred land and rights. We are facing a criminal usurper enemy which only understands the language of force, fateful confrontation, and challenge until final victory is achieved and until its evil and expansionist schemes are defeated after we retaliate for all the galaxies of martyrs on the road of struggle, and intifadah for the sake of maintaining Palestine's Arab identity.

AL-JUMHURIYAH calls on the Arabs and Muslims to honestly raise their voices and say: Shame on America which is sponsoring and committing the Zionist crime and protecting the perpetrators. Under the headline: "God is Great: They Are Slaughtering Us Collectively in the Name of Human Rights," the paper says: America's followers are not satisfied with violating honor, demolishing mosques, killing children and starving old men. Furthermore, they indiscriminately shoot worshipers in a place protected by God. The paper asks: Has this crime shaken the consciences of those who shook hands with the people whom they themselves once said that any hand extended to those people will be chopped?

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds: He who wants peace with the Arabs will not kill their children, steal their lands and waters, and demolish their mosques. Yesterday's crime revealed that the peaceful settlement is a lie and a delusion and that walking this road is a falsehood.

Addressing the U.S. president, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: You well- mannered Clinton: You must remember that human beings are the same throughout the world, in America and elsewhere. Therefore, your reaction is strange if you really believe in what you call human rights. How can you invade a country with your country's armies to guarantee the freedom of expression, as you say, while watching in silence the killing of hundreds, in fact thousands, of people with the guns and in accordance with the decisions of your army and followers in other countries and in the United States?

Concluding its editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: We are disgusted by your hypocrisy O Americans. The entire world despises your slogans and symbols. Are you aware of this, or will the cowboy continue with his crimes until he falls in a grave which he will dig with his own criminal acts?

AL-THAWRAH: 27 Feb

JN2702115494 Baghdad INA in English 0945 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 27, INA—On Friday early morning nearly sixty Palestinians had been massacred inside the Hebron mosque in al-Khalil City, occupied West Bank while performing their prayers.

AL-THAWRAH daily for today editorialised that amidst the sea of the Hebron Mosque martyrs, the whole world stands face to face before the U.S. law unsheathing its sword at the earth nations necks and their rights and dignity. And here is the U.N. Security Council, despite the Palestinians Friday carnage and others shot dead by Zionist soldiers in punishment for expressing their grief on the murdering of their brothers, is still holding unofficial consultations and waiting for formulae that would renew confidence in Israel's government and its ability to tackle the situation "in justice and wisdom".

One would wonder, the daily editorial maintains, had this crime been perpetrated by a party other than the Zionist entity, were he to hear similar to this U.S. diplomacy characterised by calmness, or witness speedy international resolutions and military concentrations, let alone pressures and land, air and sea political and economic sanctions.

AL-THAWRAH, AL-QADISIYAH: 28 Feb

JN2802114994 Baghdad INA in English 1000 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 28, INA—Iraqi press maintained today condemning and denouncing the Zionist unsightly crime of massacring the Palestinians performing their prayers inside Hebron Mosque on Friday claiming tens of lives and injuring other scores.

AL-THAWRAH daily article says the essential fact, the Americans and their allies and agents do not want to acknowledge, is that the people of Palestine who are for more than forty years waging unremitting struggle and offering dear sacrifices against encountering Zionist suppression and occupation, would not be weakened and their determination would not relax in confronting terrorism and oppression.

The Palestinians would rather continue their strife and sacrifices till they achieve restoration of their homeland and right to life, freedom and dignity and establishment of their independent state on their national soil.

The daily says if the Hebron Mosque massacre has once again embodied the criminal fascist essence of the Zionist entity and demonstrated their thirst for Palestinian blood, the U.S. attitude towards this crime discloses again its unmasked bias to the Zionist entity and emphasises its keeness on providing political protection for the Zionist entity at the international organization, apart from relevant media pretexts and covers.

AL-THAWRAH daily article has further added that as it is used to in dealing with the Zionist entity crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinian people, the United States has been for some days pursuing efforts, politically and in media not only for containing and absorbing angry reactions to the crime, [words indistinct]

At any rate, says the daily, this U.S. attitude is not the first of its kind and would not be the last. It is rather an extension to a chain of U.S. stands of bias to the Zionist enemy.

As for AL-QADISIYAH daily it has said that what took place at the Hebron mosque on Friday morning has been an expected act and represented the foundation on which the Zionist entity has been established since their criminal organisations were founded in the early of this century.

The daily concluded that the settlement negotiations with the Arabs were not stemming from conviction but rather the product of the policy of imposing the accomplished fact, the [word indistict] diplomatic apparatus had been pursuing since the time of Kissinger in order to drive the Arab parties to the negotiating table.

Minister Assails Reports on Marshland Flooding

JN2802102194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0905 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—In reply to what the British BBC and the U.S. NBC television networks have screened about alleged flooding in the marshlands, Irrigation Minister Nizar Jum'ah al-Qasir has said that the water resources in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers this year are lower than the usual average, and this does not at all allow releasing large quantities of water into the southern region of Iraq.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, he said that more than two months ago we began storing water in the dams in the upper parts of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers in anticipation of a water shortage during the next summer and winter seasons.

The minister of irrigation emphasized that Iraq's water resources from outside the country, through the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, have substantially been reduced as a result of the dams constructed by Turkey.

It is known that 75 percent of Iraq's water resources come from outside the country.

The minister said the scenes screened by BBC and NBC show floods in the marshland during the Tigris flooding in 1988. The objective of showing these scenes within the framework of a television program on the marshlands is to mislead public opinion in Britain and the United States in the course of a misinformation campaign about Iraq. Sometimes they say the Iraqi Government is draining the marshlands, now they are saying the Iraqi Government is flooding the marshlands at a time when Iraq is suffering from a water shortage. This only indicates the failure and confusion of the U.S. and British quarters in their hostile campaigns against Iraq.

Rioting, Clashes Throughout Country Cause Casualties

Over 40 Casualties in Incidents

TA2502171694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Five people have been killed in the territories since the murder in Hebron this morning: two in the al-Burayj refugee camp, one in Gaza, one in Nabulus, and one in Bayt Jala. Four were killed in incidents with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers and one by fire directed by a settler whose vehicle was stoned. Over 40 people were wounded in the incidents in the territories throughout the day. Also, 13 soldiers and border policemen were lightly wounded in the incidents. An IDF officer was injured in his head during a stoning incident in Halhul. The team from a Palestinian ambulance treated the wounded.

Moods on Temple Mount have calmed after large police forces curbed the stone throwers with gas grenades and rubber bullets. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that several hundreds of the Muslim worshipers who were at the Temple Mount at noon remain, but they are not rioting. Stones were thrown at the Western Wall plaza during the riots, and Border Police jeeps evacuated the Jewish worshipers there. About a dozen Jews are praying there now. Thirteen policemen were lightly injured in the clashes on Temple Mount.

9 Killed in Clashes

NC2502172094 Paris AFP in English 1618 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Hebron, Occupied West Bank, Feb 25 (AFP)—Fifty-two Palestinians were slain and dozens wounded at a Hebron mosque Friday while another nine Palestinians were shot dead in ensuing clashes, doctors told AFP.

In the aftermath of the firing by one or more settlers at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Israeli troops shot dead three Palestinians in Hebron, three in the Gaza Strip, one in Nablus, one in Jerusalem and a settler killed another man in the Bethlehem area, Palestinian sources said.

Police said a Palestinian hacked to death an 80-year-old Israeli with an axe near Tel Aviv and made off with his gun.

Maurice Eisenstadt was patrolling the streets of Kfar Saba as a volunteer in the civil guard. Several Palestinians in the vicinity were arrested.

Doctors in Hebron and Jerusalem hospitals reported 113 people treated for bullet wounds, most of them hurt in the mosque carnage. The killer either turned his automatic rifle on himself or was shot by someone else, the army said.

About 100 Palestinians were shot and wounded by soldiers in the Gaza Strip, about a dozen them seriously, as trouble erupted throughout the occupied territories.

In the Old City of Jerusalem hundreds of Palestinians staged running battles with police and soldiers. Palestinian sources said 47 were injured, most by rubber bullets or tear gas inhalation.

Police said 13 members of the security forces were hurt by the showers of rocks which rained down on them from the walls and Temple Mount after some 80,000 Moslems attended prayers at Al Aqsa mosque.

Update on Casualty Toll

TA2602172494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] According to unofficial figures 39 people were killed in the Cave of the Patriarchs yesterday. Fifteen residents were killed by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire in Hebron and its environs during the riots which erupted following the massacre. Another four were killed in similar circumstances—three in Gaza and one in Nabulus.

IDF spokesmen say they do not have accurate figures regarding the number of casualties in Hebron, adding that the issue is still being examined.

The number of wounded rose yesterday to more than 250 people. Approximately 100 cartridge cases fired by Barukh Goldstein were found in the Cave of the Patriarchs' Yitzhaq Hall.

The security forces are preventing Qiryat Arba' residents from entering Hebron. They can reach Jerusalem only in military escorted convoys going through Bet Shemesh. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports from Hebron that car traffic in Qiryat Arba' is extremely limited.

Incidents Continue

TA2602113594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by correspondent in the territories Moti Amir—live]

[Excerpt] The unrest in the territories continues, although the scope of the riots does not match the incidents yesterday following the Hebron massacre. In Gaza, a youth was killed a short while ago by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers' fire during severe clashes with the security forces. Early this morning, a curfew was clamped on the al-Shaykh Radwan and al-Shaja'iyah neighborhoods of Gaza, where the most extensive riots took place yesterday. Curfews were also imposed on the refugee camps of Jabalyah, al-Shati', al-Nusayrat, and Dayr al-Balah.

IDF patrols came under fire four times in Dayr al-Balah last night, and miraculously no one was hurt. There were no other shooting incidents in the Gaza Strip, and last night was quite quiet there.

In Judaea and Samaria, incidents started early this morning, mostly stone-throwing. According to the reports, stones were thrown at cars on the Bet Horon-Ben Shemen road, and four Israelis, including a baby, were injured by stones and glass debris. Two of the wounded were taken to the Hadassah Hospital, and another two were treated by medical teams on the site and refused to go to hospital.

Riots took place in the village of Yattah, south of Hebron. One person was seriously injured in the head in clashes there with the soldiers, and was taken to al-Maqasid Hospital in East Jerusalem.

Just now we are receiving additional reports from the field: In the Tulkarm refugee camp another youth was killed and six people were injured by IDF soldiers' fire. Four additional Palestinians were injured in the Qabatiyah refugee camp, near Janin. These last reports have not yet been confirmed by the security forces. [passage omitted]

Riots in Yafo, Nazareth, Other Israeli Towns

TA2602134394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Arabs are rioting within the Green Line as well. In Yefet Street in Yafo, Arabs are rioting, throwing stones and attacking passersby. Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i reports the street has been blocked and the police are dispersing the rioters with tear gas. The windows of four police cars and three parking vehicles were smashed. The vehicle of Qol Yisra'el's correspondent was also attacked.

Meanwhile tempers have calmed down in Nazareth after the police dispersed the numerous rioters with tear gas. Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that 40 residents were detained.

In the Wadi 'Ara road there are incidents of stone and bottle throwing at passing vehicles.

Five youths were detained in al-Tayyibah after they threw stones at policemen and Israeli vehicles.

There were also riots in the village of Baqa al-Gharbiyyah. Residents claim three local residents were slightly wounded by rubber bullets.

Today there are demonstrations and mourning processions in all the Arab villages within the Green Line. The demonstrators are calling for a separation between the two nations. Mourning processions are also being held in Haifa and East Jerusalem.

There were also riots at the entrances to the Temple Mount; four Arabs were detained. Youths who rioted in the Shu'fat refugee camp were dispersed with tear gas and rubber bullets. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that youths gathered near Lions Gate and threw stones. They were also dispersed with tear gas and rubber bullets.

More on Yafo Riots; 1 Killed Near Jerusalem

TA2602154094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Tempers have somewhat calmed down in Yafo, but hundreds of Arab residents are still clustered on Yefet Street. In the riot in the street this afternoon five people were slightly wounded by stones, among them policemen, an IDF Radio correspondent and an Israel television worker. Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i reports that hundreds of raging rioters threw stones, attacked policemen and passersby, called for avenging the Hebron massacre, and chanted anti-Israeli slogans. One shop was torched and several other shops on Yefet Street were damaged. Tires and garbage canisters were set ablaze and windows of several vehicles were smashed. The police used tear gas and repulsed the rioters from the street. Arab dignitaries from Yafo, Tel Aviv municipality representatives, and Police commanders are trying to calm tempers. Police Commissioner Rafi Peled is also at the site. [passage omitted]

A youth was killed by Border Police gunfire in the village of 'Isawiyah north of Jerusalem. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports a border police unit was stoned and several policemen were wounded. The force used tear gas to disperse the rioters. One of the youths took a gas grenade and hurled it at the policemen. One of the policemen, who thought the youth was handling a hand grenade, shot the youth and killed him. The youth was taken for burial, and a riot erupted in the place.

A tourist was slightly wounded by shots fired by a Jew from the settlement of Betar in Hagay Street in East Jerusalem. Our police affairs correspondent reports the man, who was apparently drunk, said he fired the shots after he spotted terrorists. The man was detained for interrogation. [passage omitted]

IDF Wounds Israelis; Incidents Continue

TA2702203294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Two Israelis were wounded by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire a short while ago near the village of 'Anabta in the Nabulus area. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that initial reports indicate that IDF soldiers shot at an Israeli truck which drove through the roadblock they were manning. The truck's two passengers were wounded. One of the passengers was seriously wounded while the second man sustained light to moderate injuries. After being treated at the scene by IDF medical teams they were rushed to the hospital.

The riots in the Bedouin town of Rahat in southern Israel are growing worse. A short while ago, the rioters hurled firebombs at policemen and at the Center for Bedouin Heritage. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the police commissioner is currently meeting with local notables in an attempt to defuse tensions but apparently no agreement has been reached on a reduction of police forces and the evacuation of the police station. The roads leading to the eastern entrances to Beersheba are still closed because of rioting and stone throwing incidents.

Following consultations with the police commissioner, Roni Milo, the mayor of Tel Aviv and Yafo, this evening announced that all the women and the youths arrested in the course of the past two days of rioting in Yafo would be released this evening. The mayor promised that if things remained quiet, the rest of the detainees would be released. Our correspondent Dani Gur-Arye reports that the mayor was speaking at a mourning ceremony at the Muslim Club in Yafo. At the ceremony, many people complained that the police had employed excessive violence. Councilman Khalid Habub asserted that the Arab residents of Yafo would accede to the mayor's request to show restraint if all the detainees were released.

A firebomb was hurled tonight on Me'ir Naqar Street, in Jerusalem's Armon Hanetziv neighborhood. No one was hurt and no damage was caused. A child was lightly injured by glass shards on Hizma junction, near Pisgat Ze'ev on the outskirts of Jerusalem, when youths hurled rocks at a No. 25 bus.

In al-Tira, the police arrested eight youths this evening. They are suspected of throwing stones at police patrol cars and setting tires on fire. Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that a total of 38 youths from al-Tayyibah, Kafr Qasim, and al-Tirah were arrested this evening by the Sharon District police.

Yafo Rioters Released; Clashes in Nazareth

TA2802120794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] The police has released 47 of the rioters arrested in Yafo. Twenty people remain under arrest. Chief Superintendent Ya'aqov Peretz, the commander of the Yafo police, told our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i that if quiet was maintained, all the detainees would be released.

Clashes are currently taking place in the center of Nazareth between the police and local residents. The police were pelted with rocks and are now using clubs to disperse the rioters. The municipality's attempts to calm the atmosphere proved unsuccessful. Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that in the village of Mashhad, near Nazareth, an army vehicle was torched and its windows were smashed. There were no casualties. The police is stopping Egged buses from travelling through large Arab towns in northern Israel to ward off any clashes with Arab residents.

Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that this morning, dozens of youths barricaded the entrance to Kafr Qasim. They fired slingshots at the police but missed.

Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the funeral procession of the Rahat resident killed yesterday has left his home and is now traveling on the Bet Qama-Mishmar Hanegev road, which has been closed to traffic. Thousands of people are attending the funeral and the atmosphere is tense.

Curfews remain in force in most of the Arab towns and refugee camps in the Gaza Strip. This is also the case in all the large towns in Judaea and Samaria and the adjacent refugee camps. Approximately 1.25 million people in the territories are under curfew.

The delegation of Palestinian notables from East Jerusalem which set out on a condolence visit to Hebron has decided to return to Jerusalem after the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] stopped it from reaching its destination. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the convoy was detained at an IDF roadblock near the al-'Arrub refugee camp and only four notables, including Faysal al-Husayni, were permitted to enter Hebron. In reaction, all the Palestinian notables decided to return to Jerusalem. Faysal al-Husayni told Qol Yisra'el that the Army had not changed its ways despite the fact that the Civil Administration was in favor of the delegation's condolence visit to Hebron.

At an IDF roadblock in the 'Etzyon Bloc, the family of a Palestinian killed in the Hebron massacre is being prevented from returning to their home in town. The five family members returned from visiting their wounded son, also injured in the Hebron attack, who is hospitalized in East Jerusalem. The family presented their Hebron identity cards but the soldiers at the roadblock are not allowing them to return home.

Cabinet Members Holds Special, Regular Meetings

Special Meeting Ends

TA2502163294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The special cabinet meeting ended in Tel Aviv a short while ago. The ministers raised proposals for the prime minister's attention and consideration. These proposals will be worked out by the prime minister and then raised for discussion at the cabinet meeting on 27 February. One proposal was to remove dangerous residents if there is evidence that they are Kakh members. Another was to pay compensation to the casualties. A third proposal was to establish a national inquiry commission.

Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that the government is determined to accelerate the peace process. Minister Amnon Rubinstein noted that for the first time, a closure was imposed also on Jewish residents in Hebron and Qiryat Arba' and that they cannot move without permission.

At the end of the meeting, Police Minister Moshe Shahal said that the police are currently operating in 12-hour shifts. Units were reinforced in all sensitive places, particularly in Jerusalem. The police minister added that the attorney general raised several proposals during the meeting, including removing Jewish residents from their homes, a move which according to the attorney general, has a legal basis.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports the closure was expanded to encompass the whole of Judaea and Samaria, and to close down the Cave of the Patriarchs for 48 hours. The closure on the Gaza Strip, imposed this morning, as well the curfew imposed on Hebron and Bethlehem following the murder, are continuing.

Announcement After Special Meeting

TA2502180394 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 February 94

[Government announcement following the cabinet meeting outside the prime minister's bureau at the government and Army compound in Tel Aviv on 25 February; read by Police Minister Moshe Shahal in Hebrew—recorded]

[Text] The government's decision following today's debate, a decision which the prime minister asked me and Minister Sarid to formulate, is as follows:

In its meeting today the cabinet expressed deep shock over the despicable murder of innocent Palestinians who were saying prayers, during the Ramadan fast, at the Cave of the Patriarchs, a place sacred to the two faiths. The government is sending its condolences to the families of the dead and is wishing speedy recovery to the wounded. The government has decided to compensate the families of the victims. The government is calling on all residents, both Arabs and Jews, to exercise maximum restraint despite the grave circumstances. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and all the security forces are adopting all necessary measures to prevent incitement, violence, and a deterioration of the situation. During the meeting, the cabinet ministers and the attorney general raised proposals for various possible measures of handling radical Israeli elements that are instigative elements in the territories. The government believes that these elements gravely and dangerously violate public order, and that every legal measure should be adopted to curb and restrain them. Even concerning an act by a single individual—as was the case in Hebron this morning—we cannot ignore the influence of instigative remarks made publicly that threaten the citizen's well-being.

The government has entrusted the prime minister and defense minister with the task of examining all measures proposed during today's discussion and of informing the cabinet of his decisions on 27 February. The investigation of today's incidents will be complete. The government is resolved to continue its peace efforts and to promote the negotiations to the best of its ability.

Cabinet To Consider Options

TA2602134094 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1200 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by Menashe Raz]

[Text] Just like yesterday's session, tomorrow's cabinet session will be held under the grave impression that the Hebron massacre might leave an eternal mark on the State of Israel. Ministers have compared the dreadful impact of the incident with similar incidents in the past, such as the Dayr al-Yasin massacre.

There will be two main issues on tomorrow's cabinet's agenda: immediate action to be taken against the hard-core of the extreme settlers in Hebron and Qiryat Arba', and finding a long-term formula in response to the international pressure focused on Israel. In this context, setting up a state commission of inquiry to investigate yesterday morning's incidents in the Cave of the Patriarchs is under discussion.

According to the justice minister and the attorney general, these two issues are fully covered by state laws, emergency regulations, and legislation applying to the territories. As for the immediate moves against what is called the Brooklyn gang and its Israeli supporters—all from the school of Rabbi Kahana—the steps discussed are: distancing them from the territories; deporting them; preventing their presence in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza; and applying administrative detentions. The authorities will deal with familiar individuals, whose names and places of residence are known.

All the cabinet ministers agree on those steps, some even expect them to be taken within hours. In the session tomorrow, they will be briefed about action taken. As for the closure on Qiryat Arba', several ministers urged clamping a curfew on Qiryat Arba', and not to settle for a closure. Observing closure is not very problematic on a Sabbath. The question is what will happen at the end of it, this evening and tomorrow morning. Most of the ministers made determined and clear remarks today on this issues as well. The principle theme is to prevent friction between Jews and Arabs in Hebron for fear of revenge.

Currently, not all the ministers agree on establishing a state commission of inquiry. Until this time, and in yesterday's cabinet session, the prime minister has not taken a stand on this issue. Justice Minister David Liba'i is leading the move to set up the inquiry team. It is the duty of the Government of Israel to document the massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs; from the historic point of view, there is no other way, those favoring the move have said. The government should not allow a situation in which such a commission is set up in response to public or international pressure. It should be initiated by the government.

Ministers in opposition to this move have said that Israel is not concealing the facts. Everything that had happened in Hebron was initiated by a single person. Punitive measures taken by the security forces, will add to the understanding that the State of Israel is handling the Hebron incident without hiding anything.

There is no intention to disarm the settlers. The ministers have rejected this outright. Another issue the government will be briefed about is the release of the Palestinian prisoners. Jerusalem sources said this morning that this issue has been agreed on in talks with the PLO, regardless of the Hebron incident. According to the sources, the incident will probably speed up the process.

[In a recorded passage later in the same newscast, Faysal al-Husayni says in English: "If the Israelis are going on thinking that in the interim period there will be a possibility of leaving the settlers on the ground and keeping their army to protect the settlers, as they are saying, it is nonsense."]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 26 February adds: "Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu today warned against the government readiness to make far-reaching concessions to the Palestinians because it is under pressure." The report adds that "Netanyahu stressed that he opposes taking unjustified steps against the settlers who constantly suffer from the Arab terror."]

Sarid on Cabinet Decisions

TA2702132594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1224 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Interview with Environment Minister Yosi Sarid by Hayim Hecht following the cabinet session, outside the Prime Minister's Office—live]

[Text] [Hecht] The cabinet session has ended, and the first bit of news is that the cabinet decided to set up a state commission of inquiry. All the resolutions the government made today were unanimous. Minister Yosi Sarid is here with us.

[Sarid] All the resolutions were unanimous. The first decision is to create a state commission of inquiry. Another decision passed was to issue restrictive orders against the extreme settlers, the men who instigate fighting and strife, those who constitute a real danger. Another decision speaks of administrative detentions; yet another speaks of the need to disarm extremist settlers, mainly in Qiryat Arba' and Hebron. Also, the attorney general was ordered to examine the possibility of outlawing extremist organizations. It is my understanding that he will present his decision in a few days.

These are the cabinet resolutions. They are important and set a precedent. I believe their gravity matches the grave view the government holds of the terrible incident that took place at the Cave of Patriarchs on 25 February.

[Hecht] When you speak about restrictive orders, we even heard of exile orders....

[Sarid, interrupting] Not exile [haglaya] orders; I speak of restrictive [hagbala] orders. Exile orders were also examined but, for legal reasons, we reached the conclusion that they will not be effective enough.

[Hecht] What do restrictive orders mean, and to how many people will they apply?

[Sarid] I do not want to discuss figures because they do not matter. What matters is the resolution, the precedent that was set. In the initial stage, the figures may be low but, should the need arise, they will grow. A restriction means that people within the Green Line boundaries will not be able to cross it if it is feared that they may constitute a threat. People residing beyond the Green Line will not be able to enter sensitive places that might turn into centers of riots when such people who act madly—and they are not mad, they only act that way—arrive there.

[Hecht] Does this mean that the hard-core Kakh activists and supporters will be removed from Hebron and Qiryat Arba'?

[Sarid] I cannot speak in generalizations because the reference is to specific, individual people. There is no doubt, however, that the government today decided to deal with the hard-core extremist elements with a very firm hand.

[Hecht] What will be the terms of reference for the state commission of inquiry that you decided to set up?

[Sarid] The precise mandate of the commission will be drafted and determined today by three persons: the foreign minister, the justice minister, and the education minister.

[Hecht] Who will head it?

[Sarid] By law, the president of the High Court of Justice, and he will determine the composition of the commission, not the government. This is one of the advantages of a state commission over other investigating teams.

[Hecht] You and the other Meretz ministers came here today well prepared, with a precise list of measures that should be taken against the mad extremists in the Hebron area. Are you satisfied that the government accepted your recommendations?

[Sarid] We are very pleased. The government did not accept our recommendations. I said before the session, and I say now, there is nothing special about the Meretz ministers. I am happy to say that the vast majority of the ministers share the same views. I believe all of them do—after all, the decisions were unanimous. Therefore, I do not believe that Meretz should keep itself separate from the other ministers.

[Hecht] Did the prime minister brief you about the upcoming resumption of the peace talks? Do you, as a senior member of the negotiating team, know of it? Did you get any message from the PLO?

[Sarid] Regrettably, we cannot say that talks are resuming at this point. There is no doubt, however, and we believe that the resolutions we made today will make it significantly easier to resume the negotiations in the coming days.

More on Decisions; Netanyahu Comments

TA2702140094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The government has decided to set up a state commission of inquiry on the massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. The government has also decided to adopt firm measures against Kakh's radical activists. Among other things, orders restricting the movement of such activists as well as detention orders will be issued, and some of the activists will be disarmed. Justice Minister David Liba'i told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the measures are in effect as of now, and will be applied according to the discretion of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] commanders in the area. All the government decisions were adopted unanimously. The attorney general was asked to check, within a few days, the possibility of outlawing radical organizations, specifically Kakh and Kahana Hay. Minister Sarid said that the possibility of issuing exile orders was examined, but it turned out that they would not be sufficiently effective. He hoped that the measures determined by the government would lead to the resumption of the political process.

As for the detention centers, the security forces are preparing for the release of 800 to 1,000 security prisoners. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the release of the prisoners is in accordance with the government's decision. The Cave of the Patriarchs itself will be reopened only after new security and prayer arrangements are arranged.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1315 GMT on 27 February elaborates on the cabinet decisions, saying that "the foreign minister, the justice minister, and Minister Amnon Rubinstein were authorized to formulate the powers of the commission of inquiry, in consultation with the attorney general and the cabinet secretary. The government decides on the establishment of the commission, but it is the Supreme Court that appoints its members." The decision on the commission was made unanimously, after Rabin withdrew his reservations about its establishment, accepting Justice Minister Liba'i's position and expressing the hope that "the establishment of such a commission would not be a precedent for other incidents."]

Knesset Member [MK] Binyanmin Netanyahu demands that a state commission of inquiry also investigate the responsibility of the political echelon for the deterioration in the security situation, and not settle for the responsibility of the military level only. According to Netanyahu, it should be determined how it is possible that 33 Israelis and dozens of Arabs have been murdered since the signing of the Oslo accord. This has been reported by our correspondent Shmu'el Tal.

The appeal submitted to the High Court of Justice on the state commission of inquiry was withdrawn. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that MK Darawshah and Attorney 'Imad Dakkur informed the High Court of Justice that they are withdrawing their appeal in the wake of the government's decisions. At the same time, the appellants announced they reserve the right to appeal to the court again if developments so warrant.

Letter of Appointment Issued to Inquiry Commission

TA2702191294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] This evening, the ministerial committee appointed by the cabinet earlier today issued the letter of appointment to the state commission of inquiry which will investigate the massacre in Hebron and reach conclusions about the facts and circumstances pertaining to it. The commission, whose composition will be decided by the president of the Supreme Court, will be entitled to submit conclusions to the government. No time limit has been set for the duration of the commission's work.

Settlement Council Approves Inquiry

TA2702142294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza [CJSJSG] approves of the establishment of a state commission of inquiry into the Hebron killings, but at the same time demands that the commission check all the events in the six years of Arab terror. CJSJSG denounces the release of terrorists from prison, and opposes the proposals to seize weapons from Jews in the territories. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that in a communique released today, CJSJSG once again expresses sorrow over the murders and denounces the killing of innocent people.

Government Imposes Curfew, Closure of West Bank, Gaza

Territories Closed; Hebron Jews Detained

TA2702055294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpt] A number of Jewish residents of Hebron have been detained by security forces overnight. An indefinite closure on the entire West Bank and the Gaza Strip went into effect this morning. Meanwhile, Palestinian leaders in the territories are demanding that the question of Jewish settlements be put at the top of the agenda, before peace talks resume. Mark Weiss reports:

In what appears to be the first stage of the expected crack down on the extremist fringe within the settler community, security forces detained overnight a number of Jewish residents of Hebron. Residents of Qiryat Arba' also reported that soldiers came to detain Kakh leaders Barukh Marzel and No'am Federman, but the two managed to escape.

An indefinite closure went into effect at 0300 this morning on the whole of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinians are not being allowed to enter Israel until further notice.

Shots were fired at an Army patrol north of Bayt Hanun in Gaza this morning. An Army jeep was hit, but none of the soldiers were injured. The troops returned fire and launched a search for the attackers.

In a second consecutive day of violence in the territories, three Palestinians were killed yesterday and dozens wounded. There were also riots throughout Arab areas inside Israel. More than 40 people were arrested in Nazareth, and in Yafo hundreds of rioters attacked police and damaged Jewish property.

The head of Fatah in the West Bank, Faysal al-Husayni, says he is recommending to PLO leaders in Tunis to continue the peace process, providing that the issue of Jewish settlements is placed at the top of the agenda. Al-Husayni said that the Hebron massacre has created a new reality, and the Declaration of Principles, drawn up in Oslo, is no longer valid. [passage omitted]

Qiryat Arba' Closure Not Observed

TA2702092594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The territories are under full closure since this morning and their residents are banned from coming to work in Israel until further notice.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that a closure was also clamped on Qiryat Arba'. In practice, however, it is not being observed and every two hours a convoy of cars and a bus to Jerusalem leaves Hebron and Qiryat Arba'. The convoys are escorted by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops due to stone-throwing incidents in the area of Halhul.

In several Israeli Arab settlements where the Islamic Movement is in power, a general strike is still observed today and will continue tomorrow. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports that Police Minister Moshe Shahal has promised Knesset Member Tawfiq Zayyad that all the Israeli Arabs detained in riots yesterday will be released today. Some 23 of the youths detained yesterday in riots in al-Tayyibah and al-Tirah were released this morning. Only two youths suspected of throwing stones were remanded in custody.

Riots continue this morning in Bedouin settlements in the Negev. Youths are hurling stones at passing cars, and a policeman was slightly injured by a stone. An Egged Company bus was set on fire in Kusayfah; no one was hurt, and the police arrested three rioters there. Rocks were hurled at reporters in Tel Sheva'. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that riots also take place in 'Aro'er and Laggiyah, and the police are trying to restore order. The 'Arad-Beersheba highway is still closed in the Kusayfah region.

In al-Tayyibah in the triangle, masked youths armed with axes staged a demonstration and set tires on fire.

Curfew Throughout West Bank

TA2702104494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The security forces have imposed a curfew on all Judaea and Samaria towns. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the curfew was clamped down on Nabulus, Qalqilyah, Ramallah, and Bethlehem, as well as their environs. The curfew on Hebron and its environs is continuing, and currently over 600,000 Palestinians in the territories are under curfew .

Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that security prisoners are currently rioting at the Megiddo prison in protest against the Hebron massacre.

Prime Minister Rabin Reacts to Hebron Incident

To Meet With Israeli Arabs

TA2502182394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Leaders of the Arab public in Israel were invited for an urgent meeting with the prime minister. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports that the meeting was initiated by the prime minister and is slated to take place in Tel Aviv at the end of the Sabbath [26 February]. Arab Knesset members, as well as the members of the Supreme Arab Follow-Up Committee, including committee head, Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, are among those who were invited to the meeting.

A strike is slated to take place in the Arab sector in Israel tomorrow, and no school classes will be held. [passage omitted]

Speaks With Envoys, Clinton

TA2702071594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Jerusalem believes that the Palestinians will show up for the continuation of the talks in Washington this week. Prime Minister Rabin last night spoke on the phone with Presidents Clinton and Mubarak mainly on how to secure the continuation of the peace talks. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports:

[Begin Hecht recording] In Jerusalem, the Hebron massacre is being compared with the deadly mortar shell in the Sarajevo marketplace. Jerusalem hopes the shock, here just as there, will make the parties realize that there is no other way but to join in an effort to complete the negotiations as quickly as possible.

The comparison with Sarajevo was mentioned more than once in the discussion the prime minister held last night with U.S. President Clinton, who called after midnight. He reiterated his personal commitment to the success of the peace process. Egypt's President Mubarak also called the prime minister and updated him on Yasir 'Arafat's difficulties in dealing with his fellow PLO leaders.

The way to bring the PLO back to the negotiating table also goes through Moscow. The Russian foreign minister last night spoke to Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and promised his help. Kozyrev also spoke to Yasir 'Arafat.

This, therefore, is the message Jerusalem delivered to Tunis through Washington, Cairo, and Moscow: Do not be silly; do not let terrorism win. We are also having a hard time with our excited opposition. We have always distinguished between handling terror and making the effort to bring peace. The prime minister knows that the resolutions the cabinet will pass this morning should cushion 'Arafat's way back to the talks.

Following recommendations from the attorney general, Rabin will present the ministers with several ideas, such as imposing travel restrictions on Kakh activists, disarming extreme settlers, and deporting the hard core of the settlers from Hebron. Rabin will brief the ministers about the imminent release of Palestinian prisoners. He has not yet accepted the idea of setting up a state commission of inquiry. This is public relations, the prime minister said, this is no real answer. [end recording]

Last night, Prime Minister Rabin met with 70 foreign ambassadors in Israel, including the U.S. and Russian ambassadors. In the meeting, Rabin for the first time revealed that the negotiations will resume in Washington on 2 March. Sheli Yehimovich reports:

[Begin Yehimovich recording] We, the prime minister told the ambassadors, immediately accepted the U.S. invitation to come to Washington and resume the talks there on 2 March. We do not have any information regarding the PLO response, and we expect developments in the coming week. I understand the shock the Palestinians are in. After all, they were the victims, but I expect them to follow our example. We also suffered casualties of terror acts, yet we made a distinction between this and the political process. I expect the Palestinians not to create a linkage or conditioning between this incident and the political process.

The ambassadors only asked a few questions: Did the assailant have personal motives, or was he a member of an ideological group? The prime minister said: There is no proof that the act was part of an organized activity. As far as we know, this dreadful and mad act was perpetrated by a single individual.

Will Israel make more compromises? the ambassadors asked. Israel will do everything to speed up the process, Rabin said. We are very close to concluding an agreement on the security issues, but there are several macroeconomic problems. This is not a question of making compromises, he said. We are committed to the Declaration of Principles. Both sides must make compromises in negotiations. [end recording]

Comments on Cabinet Decisions

TA2702190894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1748 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has commented publicly for the first time on the decisions made at today's cabinet session. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Speaking in English to delegates at the fifth conference of Jewish media, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin sharply condemned the massacre in Hebron and said that the peace process must continue. The prime minister was later interviewed by Israeli correspondents and here is Yitzhaq Rabin's first comment on the dramatic decisions made at today's cabinet session. The prime minister was first asked about his initial objection to the cabinet's ultimate decision to establish of a state commission of inquiry on the massacre in Hebron.

[Rabin] I think that we could have managed without it. I think that it will occupy the attention of many military elements because it is a state commission of inquiry. I assume that everyone will want an attorney to look into how to prepare his defense. I think it will divert a great deal of attention from the main goal. However, since the issue was brought up with the support of several cabinet ministers, and since I do not fear the findings of such a commission—especially not with regard to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] or the defense establishment in general—I would prefer not to sidetrack the main effort of getting the peace negotiations back on track by starting arguments over whether or not a commission of inquiry should be set up. Therefore, let us appoint such a commission.

[Segal] Mr. Prime Minister, to how many of the radical settlers do today's cabinet decisions apply?

[Rabin] The security forces, the IDF, and jurists will examine each case. Each such proceeding—and we even decided on administrative detentions—will be carried out by the military commander; or in other words, the right of appeal will be heard before a military appeals committee with a military judge and not by the defense minister and a civilian judge from an Israeli District Court, as was the case in the past.

[Segal] Are we talking about individual cases, or dozens, hundreds, or thousands of people?

[Rabin] I do not want to specify numbers. This decision does not deal with numbers or isolated steps. This is a policy which we will implement on a selective basis whenever required against certain people. I think that such people, while only a small minority among the settlers, constitute the focal point of friction, especially, but not only, in the Hebron area. The cabinet's decisions apply solely to them and not to the great majority of settlers in the territories.

[Segal] Mr. Prime Minister, the PLO has already rejected today's cabinet decisions as insufficient. What is your reaction to this?

[Rabin] The cabinet's decisions were adopted by the Israeli Government which decides what will happen. If some people do not like them, then that is a pity.

[Segal] Could this hinder the resumption of the peace talks?

[Rabin] These are our decisions. I see no reason not to resume the negotiations unless the PLO and the Palestinians want to reward someone who not only murdered Palestinians but sought to murder the peace process.

[Segal] Mr. Rabin, the country is on fire. There is rioting in the territories, in Yafo, and even in the Bedouin settlements in the Negev. What in your opinion can be done to stop this wave of rioting?

[Rabin] The despicable murder carried out in Hebron against worshipers at a site holy to both Jews and Muslims has undoubtedly inflamed passions. Just try to imagine what would have happened had such a massacre taken place at a holy site where Jews were praying. Would we not all be up in arms?

[Segal] Mr. Prime Minister, do you believe that the talks with the PLO in Washington could resume this week?

[Rabin] As far as Israel is concerned, the answer is yes. The ball is currently in the PLO's court.

[Segal] In his speech earlier this evening, Rabin revealed that the state commission of inquiry would be chaired by Supreme Court Justice Me'ir Shamgar. [end recording]

Compares Killer to Hamas, Islamic Jihad

TA2702190994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rabin made a comment about the massacre a short time ago in an address to the International Jewish Media Conference in Jerusalem.

[Begin Rabin recording] So far, we know that he did it on his own but I am also ashamed about others that came out publicly and supported his act. I believe that they represent a very small number of the people of Israel, even a small number among the settlers that oppose the policy of the present Government of Israel. He tried not just to kill innocent Palestinians while they were praying in a holy place. He joined with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad in the purpose to kill the peace negotiations. [end recording]

'Expected' PLO Pull Out From Talks

TA2802115194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Excerpts] [Announcer] The Prime Minister's Office says the announcement by Arab delegations that they are pulling out of the coming round of the Washington peace talks was to have been expected. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is to address the Knesset this afternoon on the Hebron massacre and its aftermath. David Ze'ev has details:

[Begin Ze'ev recording] The Prime Minister's Office says it expected the PLO to join the other Arab delegations in staying away this week from negotiations in Washington, though Yitzhaq Rabin's media adviser Gad Ben-Ari said it would be contrary to U.S. President Bill Clinton's statement that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat had agreed to attend accelerated self-rule negotiations in the American capital this week in light of the Hebron massacre.

Still, the Prime Minister's Office says Mr. Rabin anticipated the move by the Arab delegations. [passage omitted]

The prime minister is to appear before the Knesset plenum this afternoon to present a government statement in the aftermath of the Hebron massacre. The Knesset Presidium is to meet at this hour and will determine the format of the deliberation that will follow the premiers' statement: how many Knesset members are to speak and for how long. Before this afternoon's Plenum session, Rabin is to appear before the Labor caucus. The meeting is being closed to the media. The subjects on the agenda are the Hebron massacre and its repercussions and the state health bill, a hot issue threatening the coalition just a few days ago, now almost forgotten. [end recording]

[Announcer] [passage omitted] David Ze'ev reports from the Knesset that a decision has been reached to keep the debate on the Hebron massacre relatively short. Only one representative of each party's faction will be given the opportunity to speak.

Foreign Minister Peres Reacts to Hebron Incident

Rejects International Force

TA2602095394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Yaron Enosh; place not given—live]

[Text] [Enosh] We have just heard that the PLO has decided to recall its representatives to the talks with Israel in Cairo, Paris, and Washington for consultations in Tunis. We want your reaction, sir.

[Peres] I do not know this for a fact, and I would not rush to react. There are always rumors and decisions reported, and I would rather wait for the most official announcement before I make any comment. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that what happened in Hebron yesterday greatly complicates the negotiations. This madman brought a moral disgrace upon our people. It also caused a deterioration in our political standing, and I do not take this lightly at all. This will not only speed up the negotiations, it will make them more complicated, more difficult; this is clear as day. We cannot turn this entire country into a madhouse, even if there are a few madmen. Madmen should be put away.

[Enosh] We have heard remarks from people who support the act.

[Peres] You should not have broadcasted them. It is a shame, a disgrace. Their remarks are shameful.

[Enosh] This could mean, however, that we are dealing with more than just an individual; perhaps a large group of people who support him?

[Peres] Look, whoever does not meet the criteria set by the law, should be outlawed. One cannot shoot and murder people and come up with stories. That group of people who justify the act are no angels from heaven, nor do they represent the people of Israel. They have no authority, and they should not brag. They gave the Jewish people a very sad day, a moral disgrace, and with all due respect for the Cave of Patriarchs, the Ten Commandments are not less sacred. There it says: Thou shalt not kill; and they have killed.

[Enosh] Are you saying that measures should be taken against these people?

[Peres] I believe that people who do not respect the law, should be outlawed.

[Enosh] Yesterday's cabinet meeting discussed some of the measures. What more do you believe should be done to prevent such things from recurring and such remarks from being uttered?

[Peres] We decided that we will make resolutions tomorrow. I will be at tomorrow's cabinet session, and speak there. I will state, however, that there is no doubt that the harshest and clearest measures must be taken to prevent the fire of hatred from bursting out of this place and prevent the violation of all human norms. The Jewish people are a humanitarian nation. It is not a nation of murderers who shoot innocent people. None of them has a right to justify this shameful act.

[Enosh] I would like to move on to the political issues, in view of the loathsome murders in Hebron. Israel has, in fact, reneged on one of the principles it insisted on for quite a long time, and agreed to moving the security talks with PLO out of the region, out of Taba.

[Peres] There is no doubt that at this stage we must save the negotiations. Certainly, yesterday's incident places an enormous burden on us. There is no point in playing down the crime or the damage it caused. Certainly it made our standing more difficult, and certainly we are no longer free to do whatever we want. Israel is greatly interested today in demonstrating that indeed it means peace; real peace, not the peace of madmen.

[Enosh] We have heard that political sources in Jerusalem said that this will speed up....

[Peres, interrupting] I do not know who those sources are, and I do not know what they said. It is absolutely clear that matters are very complicated now. We scored no achievement nor half an achievement, and there is no point in portraying this as such. The incident harmed us and caused us damage despite the fact that it was done by a single madman who feeds on a larger madness.

[Enosh] The PLO, through its UN representative, is currently demanding that an international force be placed in the area because, it claims, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the State of Israel are unable to maintain order in the territories. This is a very complicated call from our point of view, but do you believe such a resolution could ever pass?

[Peres] Absolutely not. We have seen multinational forces in Somalia and Bosnia. Such a force cannot bring about peace. Peace is the business of politicians. Regrettably, a multinational force has never succeeded in its task, be it in Angola, Somalia, Bosnia, or Lebanon.

On Steps Against Violent Settlers

TA2702114294 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Ya'el Dan and Mikha Friedman "earlier today"; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Friedman] In the cabinet session today, a demand will be made that a state commission of inquiry be set up and that the Hebron settlers be disarmed. What is your position?

[Peres] They went too far this time. They want to bring disaster to the Jewish nation. These people represent everything which contradicts the moral stands of Jewish people, not to mention the political stands. In no way should we let this go without a response. We must not be intimidated by them. They must not be given a free hand. The damage they have caused is hard to imagine.

You know, on occasion, the settlers compare themselves with those who have been working the land in Israeli kibbutzim and moshavim. In 80 years of our settling this land, there was never an incident such as shooting at university students, at a bus, or at worshipers who pray in the Cave of the Patriarchs from the back. These are terrible phenomena. And what makes the blood boil even more are the pictures of the people who speak with near satisfaction about the incident. This group is a disaster for the Jewish people. They should be barred from having any possibility of using firearms.

[Dan] Many practical questions emerge now regarding the means that should be taken against this population. There is talk about disarming them, deporting them, placing them under administrative detention, and so on. What do you think?

[Peres] I say that the most far-reaching steps should be taken, naturally subject to legal considerations. This morning, at the cabinet session, I will hear the legal considerations.

[Friedman] Meaning that you first want to hear out the attorney general?

[Peres] Absolutely.

[Dan] Let us be more specific: Should they be disarmed?

[Peres] I would not want to engage in this. A minister should not discuss this on the radio; we have a cabinet session for this. I do not believe that every minister should point to his personal position. The government should take a bold, serious, far-reaching stand. The disaster is twofold: One is what they did, the other is our fearing them. This is a disaster as well.

[Friedman] Do you regret today the move of a previous government in which you served to set up the settlement of Qiryat Arba' at the heart of Arab Hebron.

[Peres] What difference does it make today? The reason to set up Qiryat Arba' was to avoid settling in the heart of Hebron. Eventually, they set up Qiryat Arba' but also settled in Hebron. Everything we were afraid of actually happened. We knew in advance that a settlement in Hebron would lead to bloody events. We knew it was only a matter of time before they take place and cast a shadow on the whole enterprise. Therefore, even if such a decision was made, it was carried out in a twisted manner.

[Friedman] And now, Mr. Peres, there is a political process at the end of which, when the negotiations are completed, a Palestinian autonomy will be set up in the territories. Do you believe such an autonomy can be effectively managed in a way that would eventually lead us to a comprehensive peace agreement with the Palestinians, when such a nucleus resides in the heart of Arab Hebron? Or should they be evacuated from there?

[Peres] This nucleus will not manage the State of Israel nor the policy of Israel. This is not the first time that Jewish factions depart from the nation. We will not allow such people to manage the State of Israel, on its or on our behalf. The appropriate measures should be taken. We are not a miserable nation. We have the power not to allow murderers to represent the Jewish people.

Regrets PLO Suspension of Talks

TA2802093394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has expressed regret over the PLO's decision to put off the resumption of the negotiations with Israel. Peres told our correspondent Menahem Friedman that the government had approved tough steps against all manifestations of murder and violence or attempts to undermine the peace process. Foreign Minister Peres said there was a small group of people who posed a real danger to national security. The people who attended the murderer's funeral and shouted that he was a martyr pose a danger to Israel's future. The foreign minister nevertheless stressed that the Palestinians had no better alternative than resuming the peace process.

Government Officials React To Hebron Incident

Comments by Sarid, Shahal

TA2502193094

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1540 GMT on 25 February carries live interviews with Ministers Sarid and Shahal who formulated the announcement issued by the government at the end of its special meeting today.

In the course of his interview, Minister Sarid expresses his belief that an inquiry commission should be set up, as proposed in the cabinet meeting, stressing though that "there is no doubt that today's murder was carried out by a single individual who acted alone. He was the only shooter." As for how he managed to carry out his act in the Cave of the Patriarchs unhindered by the Army, Sarid says: "An explanation was given by the Army. I believe it should be given by the Army. There was a door there which should have been locked, and the officer who was in charge of the scene at the time tried to enter the prayer hall but was pushed back by the crowd of worshipers who fled outside." Minister Sarid also emphasizes the decision by the commander of the Central Command, as reported to the cabinet today, on the curfew imposed on Jews in Hebron "who are allowed to move freely only in their area of residence, but, for the first time, are not allowed to enter the town of Hebron. As for Qiryat Arba', the closure means it is possible to enter and exit Qiryat Arba' only at a special request for permission from the IDF."

During his interview, Police Minister Shahal is asked whether today's incident is not the result of police's helplessness in enforcing the law on the settlers, specifically Kakh members. He responded that the police are not responsible for public order in the territories at all. Still, in its capacity of opening files against criminals, the police does so when evidence is collected, but "there was no concrete material" against this morning's murderer, except for talk which took place a few months ago [reference is to the radio interview cited in second referent item]. Israel is a country of law, and "in this and other cases, when the material was brought up by the Shin Bet and other elements, the conclusion was that there were not sufficient evidence to put the persons involved on trial." If material and evidence warrant, then per the attorney general and as proposed in the cabinet meeting today, individuals can also be removed or exiled.

Minister Sees Talks Accelerating

NC2602095294 Paris AFP in English 0918 GMT 26 Feb 94

[By Barry Parker]

[Excerpts] Jerusalem, Feb 26 (AFP)—Israel and the PLO have pledged to turn the terrible carnage in a Hebron mosque into a catalyst for peace in fresh talks under US auspices next week.

"Paradoxically the tragedy leaves Israel and the PLO no alternative but to accelerate the peace negotiations so that the PLO can take control in the territories as soon as possible," an Israeli minister, who asked not to be named, told AFP.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat agreed to U.S. President Bill Clinton's appeal not to allow the massacre to undermine recent achievements and to hold new negotiations that will continue in Washington until a resolution is reached.

The minister said "damage control" contacts over the last 24 hours between Israel and the PLO as well as with the Americans and Europeans had proved positive.

"Everyone agrees that we have to push ahead with peace," the minister said. "The negotiations could go very fast now."

There is no problem with the Palestinian leadership, what we fear is the Palestinian street.

"The coming days will be crucial. Things could get out of control in the territories."

For that reason, on top of international condemnation, Israel was under great pressure to come up with some real gestures such as an early release of Palestinian prisoners, to keep a lid on the violence, he said. Rabin was weighing his next move on Saturday, the minister added.

"The decision to punish the settlers by closing off Qiryat Arba' and to compensate Palestinian families is important. Symbolic measures such as closing off the killer's house or even blowing it up, as happens with the Palestinians, are under consideration," he revealed.

He said he hoped that ultimately the massacre could reduce the period of autonomy to under five years, allowing an early transition to a final settlement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

Rabin pledged the killing would not halt the peace train.

"The crazy act of a pyschopath will not prevent the reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians and will not stop the peace process," he vowed.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres added: "If anyone thinks such criminal acts will slow the peace efforts, they are sorely mistaken." [passage omitted]

Tzaban, Rubinstein Back Anti-Kakh Moves

TA2602113894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Minister Ya'ir Tzaban has said that in tomorrow's cabinet session he will again demand that all of the Kahanist organizations be outlawed and that the concentrations of settlers be moved out of Hebron.

Minister Amnon Rubinstein also said that tomorrow he will support the suggestions to outlaw Kakh members and supporters, to distance them from Qiryat Arba', disarm them, and not draft them to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. He told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the upsetting remarks Kakh members made on Qol Yisra'el's weekly newsreel prove that the extremist settlers' moral standards have drastically deteriorated.

Chief of Staff Baraq Comments

TA2602163194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1520 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq today visited the Cave of the Patriarchs and the Hebron area with senior IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers and conducted a debriefing of yesterday's incidents. After reaching his conclusions Lieutenant General Baraq convened a news conference, which was attended by our correspondent Karmela Menashe:

[Begin recording] [Baraq] Early yesterday morning a shocking murder was carried out by a lunatic in this place. He murdered innocent people on a holy day in a place of worship which is holy to both religions. We are deeply grieved by this terrible and unnecessary loss of life and share the sorrow of the families, the residents of Hebron and the entire Palestinian people and its leadership. We will do everything possible to determine as best we can the circumstances of the incident itself and the ensuing events and will do everything possible to minimize the chances of the recurrence of such events.

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you have any picture of what happened inside these halls?

[Baraq] Dr. Goldstein entered early morning and apparently opened fire from one of the passages connecting the two prayer areas—it is still unclear which passage. He opened fire at the group of worshipers who were praying in the Muslim hall. I cannot determine the facts beyond this yet. The entire issue is under a thorough investigation. I have no doubts that in the wake of this investigation the entire picture will become clear. This is the situation. To the best of my knowledge Dr. Goldstein was the only one who fired shots inside this hall.

[Menashe] The chief of staff was also asked whether steps will be implemented against the settlers in Qiryat Arba' and Hebron.

[Baraq] At this point I am not qualified to say whether any steps will be implemented. Right now there is a curfew in Hebron and a closure on the Jewish settlement. This situation will continue for the time being.

[Menashe] Will you change the procedures and the soldiers' operation in this area?

[Baraq] We will implement whatever recommendations will surface in light of the investigation. An investigation is being carried at the division level and a debriefing by Brigadier General Agmon on behalf of the General Staff. I have no doubts that the events which occurred here and the incident which happened near the hospital [not further specified] will be thoroughly investigated. I am convinced that we will do whatever is necessary after the investigation is completed.

For years hundreds of Muslims and Israelis have been praying side by side—at times simultaneously—and there are quite a few passages connecting the two areas in this intricate structure.

[Menashe] The chief of staff was asked for his opinion regarding the demand for an inquiry commission, as demanded by some ministers.

[Baraq] The Police are conducting a criminal investigation of this incident, and I have no doubts it will exhaust all the criminal responsibility in this incident. The Central Command and the General Staff have also appointed officers to investigate the incident. We have no reservations or opposition to any other investigations. We have no position regarding this question.

[Menashe] Lt. Gen. Baraq also met the leaders and dignitaries of Hebron.

[Baraq] I met Hebron's mayor and a group of dignitaries and expressed our deep shock at this despicable crime, as well as the IDF's and the entire Israeli people's denunciation of this incident, and our determination to do whatever we can to ascertain exactly what happened and to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

[Menashe] Chief of Staff Baraq, who held the news conference near the Cave of the Patriarchs, emphasized that apparently there should have been border policemen stationed near the Cave of the Patriarchs yesterday, but they were not there. [end recording]

Beilin Rejects International Force

JN2602190894 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1720 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report on interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—passages in Italics recorded in English]

[Text] [Announcer] The Israeli Government will meet tomorrow. We imagine how important this meeting will be, particularly since measures will be taken against the settlers, or, at least, the extremist ones.

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin supplied us with important information. We asked him about the nature of the measures the Rabin government could take tomorrow.

[Beilin] *Well, I prefer to wait for tomorrow, because decisions will be taken tomorrow. But, I can already say that, for the first time, there was a curfew on an Israeli settlement in the West Bank. It never happened in the past, and I think that we should see whether there are some legal ways to outlaw those very extreme organizations which went out saying that they should act in a violent way against the peace process.*

[Announcer] As for disarming the settlers, as Palestinians are calling for, Yosi Beilin believes this demand is not realistic.

[Beilin] *I do not believe this demand is a realistic one. After all, after so many years, we are going to have in the territories, in Gaza and Jericho, a strong Palestinian police. I do not think it is possible and reasonable, when this police will be armed, to disarm the settlers after 26 years. What is important is to prevent the dangerous among them to be armed, and to go for a full solution, so that in the future, something like that will not happen. I think that if any such demand is becoming a condition, it will just delay the process and will be the best prize for those who would not like to see a peace process in our part of the world.*

[Announcer] There is another Palestinian demand expressed by Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] and Faruq Qaddumi in his interview with our radio, that of sending international forces to protect the Palestinians. Here too, the Israeli deputy foreign minister does not believe this demand is a wise one.

[Beilin] *I do not believe that now, on the verge of the implementation of the Oslo agreement, it would be wise on both sides to invite international forces. But, you have to take into consideration that in Oslo, we agreed together that as part of the implementation of the agreement, there would be an international presence in the autonomy. So, I do not believe that now speaking about something which is different from that is a wise thing to do.*

Envoy to UN on UN Proposals, Settlers

TA2602185394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The UN Security Council is to resume its debate of the Hebron massacre this evening. A short while ago in Jerusalem, Israeli officials were informed that the U.S. will support a Security Council resolution which expresses regret over the events in Hebron, and calls on Israel to take all measures to restore calm to the area. Israeli officials are said to be pleased with the

American position. The PLO has demanded that the Security Council resolution make an announcement to send international forces to the territories to protect Palestinian civilians. The Security Council started discussing the situation last night. Judy Lessing filed this report from New York:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Lessing] Islamic countries have given the Council a draft resolution. The United States has taken the lead in writing a statement. So the two sides will consult and work out the way the Council will condemn the massacre. The Council president said the resolution was fairly mild, the statement has much stronger wording. He said neither is critical of the Israeli Army, but is of the settlers. Ambassador Gad Ya'aqobi understands something similar.

[Ya'aqobi] To the best of my knowledge none of the proposals here is condemning Israel, and we condemned as well the murder, the act of this lunatic murderer, so there is no proposal to condemn Israel on this matter.

[Lessing] The PLO has said it was clear settlers should be disarmed, but Ambassador Ya'aqobi wasn't ready to agree to this step.

[Ya'aqobi] If you will assure me the total disarming of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad, which killed many settlers and many other Jewish people in Israel lately, then I will be able to consider this question.

[Lessing] Ambassador Ya'aqobi would prefer to see a statement calling for quick progress in the PLO-Israel negotiations, rather than a resolution, because the massacre was carried out by a single person, and wasn't done by a country or a people. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Meretz, Aloni Urge Measures

TA2702094694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Meretz demands that a state commission of inquiry be set up to investigate the incidents in Hebron, and that an Israeli Arab with legal education be a member of its board.

In the cabinet session today, Meretz ministers will demand that all the extreme settlers who advocate murder be arrested at once; that extremists be taken out of Tal al-Rumaydah, Hadassah House, and Romano House in the heart of Hebron; that the Army be instructed not to shoot at Palestinians in the territories; and that all that has so far been agreed on in the talks with the PLO be implemented at once.

Minister Shulamit Aloni told our correspondent Sheli Yehimovich that Meretz will also demand that the Kakh Movement be outlawed. According to her, we should make a distinction between idiots who speak out of their stupidity, and real instigators. She added that the remarks by Police Minister Moshe Shahal that the police are dealing with Arab and Jewish murderers along the same criteria are not true, and there is discrimination.

At the same time, she opposes the demand that the house of Barukh Goldstein be sealed, just as she opposes sealing the homes of Arabs. Minister Aloni added that the reserved condemnation of the Hebron massacre by the settler leaders borders on racism and viciousness. She added that Goldstein was not operating in a vacuum. In Israel, there is a nursery of Arab-hating racists who are after Arabs' lives and property, she said.

Beilin: U.S. Help Needed in Peace Talks

TA2802070394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Me'ir Einstein; place not given—live]

[Text] [Einstein] Were you surprised by the Arab decision to suspend the talks?

[Beilin] It is hard to say that I was surprised but this is definitely a worrisome development which should not be disregarded. I think that the next step should be the United States getting into the thick of things in order to prevent any exacerbation that could ultimately present all the parties with a situation they may not have initially wanted. Such a development may, God forbid, preclude the continuation of the talks.

[Einstein] You speak of deeper U.S. involvement in the talks. Perhaps from our point of view this may lead to greater pressure on Israel?

[Beilin] No, definitely not. We are not worried about U.S. pressure on Israel. There is a high level of coordination between the United States and Israel. We know that the U.S. Administration is highly interested in promoting the peace process. On no account would the United States want the situation to deteriorate. Now, after this terrible act, Israel would have a hard time directly persuading the Syrians and Lebanese to return to the talks. We are also having a hard time with the PLO in this respect. I believe that right now the Americans could be helpful in this.

[Einstein] Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin, should Israel perhaps be more forthcoming toward the PLO, or were yesterday's cabinet decisions sufficient?

[Beilin] I believe that the decisions made yesterday constitute a precedent. Such decisions have never been taken before.

[Einstein] But nevertheless?

[Beilin] I do not see any room for additional decisions with regard to what happened in Hebron and the ramifications of that terrible deed. Israel can now tell the world that it has done all it could, and I very much hope that it will now be easier to resume the political process despite all the natural and understandable difficulties.

[Einstein] Thank you, Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin.

Sarid Urges Resuming Peace Talks

TA2802081494 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Environment Minister Yosi Sarid by Uri Paz and Ya'el Dan on 28 February; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Paz] Earlier this morning, we spoke with Minister Yosi Sarid and asked for his reaction to the suspension of the peace negotiations with the Arab delegations in Washington.

[Sarid] Clearly I was sad to learn last night of the decision to break off the Washington talks. I regret the decision but I cannot say that I was surprised. Already last Friday [25 February], the day of the massacre, it was obvious that such an event could not simply pass without leaving its mark on the talks. It was hard to imagine that it would just continue to be business as usual. Nevertheless, the fact that the talks are being halted is cause for a great deal of sorrow, frustration, and disappointment because, as has already been noted, the desire of this evil man, this Jekyll and Hyde, was to stop the talks and this is indeed happening. There is nothing worse than granting murderers what they want.

[Paz] In your opinion, can we talk about long-term damage to the peace process this morning?

[Sarid] I very much hope not. I therefore appeal to the Palestinian leadership to consider this period merely as a short time out, which will be followed by an immediate resumption of the negotiations.

[Dan] What will bring them back to the negotiating table?

[Sarid] Look, I do not demand anything of the Palestinian leadership that we have not already demanded of ourselves. The Israeli leadership has also faced extremely difficult challenges in recent weeks. There have been many terrorist attacks since 13 September, and we vividly remember each and every one of them. The familiar voices calling for a halt in the negotiations and the abandonment of the peace process were heard in Israel. Some new voices even joined in the chorus. We rejected these demands. It was difficult and painful. We had to clench our fists and bite our lips, but we nevertheless proceeded, and, I might say, even stuck to the peace process with more conviction and resoluteness. Now it is the turn of the Palestinian leadership to follow the example set by their Israeli counterparts. Our Palestinian colleagues are going through a tough period. I realize that these are difficult days and that they are very upset. This is certainly understandable and we will wait several days in the hope and faith that we will all return to Washington next week to continue talking because we have no other alternative.

[Paz] Minister Sarid, one more question. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that Israel would make no additional concessions to the PLO in order to bring them back to the negotiating table. Is refusing to make any further concessions indeed the correct approach? Perhaps we should make some concessions to demonstrate our goodwill and improve the atmosphere?

[Sarid] I have two things to say to that. One, I think that yesterday's cabinet decisions provide a good basis for the continuation of the negotiations. These very important and unprecedented decisions in my opinion indicate the government's readiness and commitment to confront the radical elements in Israel, control and restrain their activities, and if necessary even totally suppress them. That is one thing. Second, I would like to issue a warning about reopening understandings. Now they want to reopen the agreement because of what happened in Hebron. Tomorrow, God forbid, there may be another terrorist attack and this or that party will make additional demands to reopen and change things. There will be no end to this and the agreement will totally disintegrate. An agreement is not a zipper that one opens and closes at will.

[Dan] But what will bring the Arab delegations back to the talks?

[Sarid] A sense of responsibility and the lack of other alternatives.

[Dan] Thank you very much, Minister Yosi Sarid.

Bar'am Calls For Removing Settlers

TA2802110394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am has demanded the immediate evacuation of all the settlers from Hebron, Bet Hadassah, Bet Romano, and Tall al-Rumaythah. Minister Bar'am estimated that another four or five cabinet ministers supported his position. In his opinion, yesterday's cabinet decisions were insufficient and did not meet the urgent need to halt a deterioration of the situation. Minister Bar'am was speaking in an interview to Qol Yisra'el.

Immigrant Absorption Minister Ya'ir Tzaban said that he had information that reserve IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers were training groups from the Jewish Defense League, Kakh, and Kahana Hay in the United States. Tzaban told Qol Yisra'el that last year, the Kahana Hay movement had trained 200 youths in New York. Three graduates of that course arrived in Israel and embarked on violent tours of the territories. Minister Tzaban called for a ban on entry into Israel for members of these groups.

Ben-Eli'ezer on Dismantling Settlements

TA2802122094 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Transportation Minister Yisra'el Qeysar has demanded that the prime minister ban the Kakh movement. Qeysar also demanded new criteria for gun permits to settlers in Judaea and Samaria. Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer called for the dismantling of the Jewish settlements situated in the heart of Arab population centers. Ben-Eli'ezer was interviewed on IDF Radio by Qobi Meydan.

[Begin recording] [Ben-Eli'ezer] In my opinion, we have only two choices: one choice is to deploy an entire brigade to guard them and the second alternative is to dismantle these settlements.

[Meydan] In other words you are talking about dismantling these settlements for all practical purposes?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] Why for all practical purposes? Today these settlements are the focal point for tension and potential pogroms. I say that we have two choices: either guard them day and night while also watching and controlling their every step or we dismantle them. There is nothing else to do.

[Meydan] If you had the choice, Mr. Ben-Eli'ezer, of either bringing in a brigade to watch over ten settlers or to dismantle the settlement, what would you decide?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] If the decision was up to me I would dismantle it. I am talking about certain, specific settlements. One cannot continue dreaming about autonomy and coexistence. One cannot go along with the process when you see people forcefully leading toward a violent confrontation. [end recording]

President Weizman Tours Hebron, Qiryat Arba'

TA2702122694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] President 'Ezer Weizman this morning toured Qiryat Arba' and met the heads of its council. The president explained to them the gravity of the incident in the Cave of Patriarchs, and said that it stands in contradiction to every Jewish concept as well as the security doctrines as the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] teaches them.

Earlier, the president toured Hebron. He met the mayor and spoke to passersby. The Hebron mayor thanked President Weizman for his visit, and asked the Hebron massacre be thoroughly investigated, and that conclusions be drawn.

Rabinovich: U.S. Holding Consultations on Massacre

TA2502164294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1515 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with Ambassador to the United States Itamar Rabinovich by correspondent Arye Golan in Washington on 25 February—recorded]

[Text] [Golan] Ambassador Rabinovich, what effect will the massacre have on the peace talks?

[Rabinovich] We do not know yet. We are not dealing here with speculations or expectations. There is ongoing activity in Israel, the United States, and in other capitals to contain the damage and try to prevent negative effects on the peace process. We are maintaining ongoing contacts with the peace team in the U.S. Administration. We expect there will be high-level contacts between the Israeli Government and the U.S. Administration later today. I think President Clinton will address the issue later today. All this is intended to prevent, or at least minimize, the damages to the peace process.

[Golan] Did you speak with our Arab interlocutors to the peace talks?

[Rabinovich] Not yet, but such contacts will take place later today.

[Golan] Have you heard what they are saying to the Americans now?

[Rabinovich] No, I do not think there is any explicit message from them yet. I think the Arab side, like us, is still unclear about the events, some of which are unfortunately still going on.

[Golan] They did not say they are halting the talks and returning home, did they?

[Rabinovich] No, there was no such announcement.

[Golan] What do the Americans intend to do in order to calm tempers down?

[Rabinovich] I think right now the Americans are holding internal consultations, with us and with the Arab and Palestinian side. I think they have still not consolidated any concrete policy. This will probably take place in the next few hours.

[Golan] How do the Americans regard the Palestinian demand to disarm the settlers?

[Rabinovich] I do not think the Americans believe the time has come to address such concrete issues. This is not the key issue when we are trying to figure out how to save the peace process from severe harm. I assume that if such a request was submitted to the Americans they would have known how to rank it on the list of priorities.

[Golan] How will the Security Council deal with this issue when it is submitted to it?

[Rabinovich] It is too early to assess what will happen in the Security Council, because the format for dealing with this issue has still not been determined. We must remember that the Security Council can meet on various levels and forms, and so far this issue has not been determined.

Security at Patriarch's Cave Transferred

TA2602204294 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Yitzhaq Rabin, the prime minister and defense minister, has decided to transfer the security in the Cave of the Patriarchs from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to the Border Police. This was divulged today by Police Minister Moshe Shahal. Our police affairs correspondent Uri Kohen-Aharonov reports the battalion-strong force will collect all the weapons from the Jewish worshipers. Senior sources in the Police Ministry regard this decision as a sign for the transference of more powers to the police in the territories. The police minister also said he intends to facilitate the erection of a security fence above the Western Wall. The proposal to erect this fence was one of the main recommendations of the Hefetz Committee which investigated the Temple Mount bloodbath three years ago. Minister Shahal supported the implementation of the recommendation, but so far it was delayed.

In a meeting this evening in the defense minister's office in Tel Aviv it was decided to examine a series of steps to be taken against inciting elements from among the settlers in Hebron and Qiryat Arba'. The meeting was attended by the prime minister, the police minister, the attorney general, and security elements. Police Minister Shahal told our correspondent Menashe Raz this evening that there is only one law for Jews and Arabs:

[Begin recording] [Raz] Mr. Shahal, you just came from a consultation held with the prime minister. Have you decided on a series of steps to be taken against inciting elements from among the Hebron and Qiryat Arba' settlers?

[Shahal] I cannot give details. We held a discussion which reviewed all the problems. The legal and operational ramifications were raised. The discussion was held on a professional and general level, without entering the details of the issue. The attorney general, the chief of staff, the commander of the Central Command and other elements participated in the consultation.

[Raz] Does the current law in force in the territories allow you to deport elements you do not want to remain in the territories, or to implement other measures against inciting Jewish elements?

[Shahal] The authority vested with the commanders of the IDF Commands and other military officers are sufficiently broad to enable them to implement steps when the commander believes there is a danger to the public's security. In order to prevent this danger he is entitled to order an administrative detention or to remove the persons concerned, or to limit their exit from or entrance to certain areas. He can implement these steps on the basis of information he possesses and if he believes this is necessary to maintain security. In these hours of hardship, however, we must not forget that we must preserve civil rights and Israel's democracy.

[Raz] Are you referring only to Kakh people, or to other familiar figures in Qiryat Arba' and Hebron who are not Kakh members?

[Shahal] We are referring to whoever might pose a danger to security and those who intend to carry out attacks or have done so in the past.

[Raz] Mr. Shahal, in yesterday's cabinet session, ministers referred to the necessity of implementing dramatic steps in the wake of the new situation. Will one of this dramatic steps be implemented in Hebron and Qiryat Arba' in the next few hours?

[Shahal] I cannot answer this question. I do not think that any dramatic steps are called for. We need a step within the limits of the law, to be implemented firmly and without any hesitations against whoever tries to break the law. Here we will not discriminate: Everybody, no matter what his nationality, is subjected to the same law. The Israeli Government is bound to act on the basis of this principle, both morally and legally.

[Raz] Today we have seen that the intifadah crossed the Green Line. There were riots in Yafo and in Israeli Arab villages. I assume the government is very concerned about this.

[Shahal] The prime minister will shortly meet the heads of the Israeli Arab sector. I will also attend this meeting. We are calling on the Israeli Arab population not to lend themselves to incitement and extremists. Relations between the Israeli Arab population and the state have always been good. They know very well what the government is doing. We are calling on them—and especially on their leadership—to prevent inciters and extremists from gaining control.

The Israeli Police are evincing great restraint, but at the same time we will firmly prevent any deterioration in the situation. This must be very clear to all those who tried to violate the law. We are holding several detainees, and we will deal with them according to law. I hope tempers will calm down. We will continue acting as we have always done, as a law abiding country where all the citizens must act according to the law. [end recording]

Zvili Sends 'Arafat Message of Condolences

TA2602154994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili has sent a cable to Yasir 'Arafat stating he is shocked and horrified by the insane murder of innocent Palestinians at the Cave of the Patriarchs. Mr. Zvili emphasized the Israeli authorities are doing everything to prevent an exacerbation of the situation, and that the only way to break out of the circle of violence is to concentrate all efforts in order to facilitate the peace process.

Our party affairs correspondent Shmu'el Tal reports opposition leaders will convene this evening to consolidate positions in view of the possibility that the government will take advantage of the situation in order to facilitate the peace process.

Bethlehem Mayor Stresses Need To Disarm Settlers

NC2702095394 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj in Bethlehem by Muhammad al-Aswad in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Al-Aswad] Mr. Frayj, we welcome you to Voice of the Arabs.

[Frayj] Thank you.

[Al-Aswad] We start this dialogue by asking you to fill us in on any of the new dimensions regarding the incident at the al- Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn on Friday.

[Frayj] The criminal act that took place at dawn on Friday at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron can only be explained by the fact that it is based on racists who hate the presence of the Arabs. Killing worshipers who are kneeling in prayer to God Almighty indiscriminately and without prior warning is an organized crime with very dangerous political significance. It did not take place in a vacuum. All the sons of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have been terribly hurt and shocked by this act. We are now demanding international protection. We are demanding that the criminals in the Israeli settlements be disarmed. We are demanding that all worshipers—Muslim, Jew, or Christian—be prevented from entering any holy place carrying weapons. Under no circumstances should any person be allowed to carry weapons in a place of worship.

Second, we are demanding that a high-ranking judicial committee be formed to investigate the circumstances of the crime. This has cast dark shadows on the peace process. How can there be peace when the settlers tamper with security as they please? The successive Israeli governments for the past 26 years have not tried to curb the belligerence of the settlers or their attacks on Arab citizens. The settlers all over the West Bank are trying to occupy Arab lands to expand the territory they have. [passage omitted]

[Al-Aswad] Mr. Frayj, what, in your opinion, should the scope of Palestinian action be at the United Nations to secure international protection for the Palestinian people?

[Frayj] We ask the Security Council to provide protection for the Palestinian Arab citizens in the occupied territories from the attacks of the settlers and the army, which take place repeatedly without any deterrent. For example, over 15 Palestinian youths were killed by the army under false pretexts, while not a single Israeli soldier was injured.

[Al-Aswad] In light of these circumstances, Mr. Ilyas Frayj, who has responsibility for the security of the Palestinian citizens?

[Frayj] I believe that security is the responsibility of the present authority, the responsibility of Israel. Since Israel does not provide us with the basic minimum security required, we demand that the United Nations and the Security Council form an international force to keep the peace and provide security.

[Al-Aswad] You noted in this interview that Israel is responsible for what happened. What are the limits of this responsibility? And is it true what is being said—that 20-50 Israeli armed men participated in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre?

[Frayj] Israeli sources claim that only one person carried out the operation. I doubt that. I hold Israel fully responsible for the total security of the Arab citizens and residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip so long as it controls the situation there. Either the Palestinian police should be allowed to enter the West Bank and Gaza Strip immediately, or an international force should be deployed to protect the citizens. However, I insist that the settlers should be disarmed and prevented from entering places of worship carrying arms.

[Al-Aswad] How do you see the general atmosphere in the occupied territories after the recent massacre? And will it affect the credibility of the current peace process?

[Frayj] The vast majority of citizens now do not believe the peace negotiations are useful since they do not include the issue of the settlers. The vast majority are now confused. What is the use of having talks while 120,000 settlers romp and kill people in the West Bank for no reason whatsoever? The Israeli Army sometimes helps them but it often turns a blind eye and does nothing. The settlers are very spoiled and behave like cowboys [preceding word in English] in the occupied territories. The Israeli settler who committed this crime did it because he thought he was a cowboy dealing with Red Indians.

[Al-Aswad] Mr. Frayj, thank you for this dialogue on Voice of the Arabs.

Kakh Members To Be Given Detention, Banishment Orders

TA2702152194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The government will issue administrative detention orders for five leaders of the Kakh movement, as well as restriction and banishment orders for 30 of its activists. The orders will be issued in accordance with the government's decision at noon today to confiscate the weapons of several Kakh activists. [passage omitted]

The cabinet was told today that according to the debriefings conducted by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the Israel Police, 39 people were murdered in the Cave of the Patriarchs and 6 were killed in the city of Hebron in ensuing clashes. Major General Dani Yatom reported that Dr. Barukh Goldstein fired 111 bullets.

Jewish Organization Warns of Retaliation

TA2702093794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] An unidentified person telephoned the Qol Yisra'el newsroom this morning and said he was speaking on behalf of an organization called Shlomtziyon-Yehuda [The Well-Being of Zion-Judaea]. He warned that his organization will retaliate to every terror attack by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or the Islamic Jihad with murders, in Israel or abroad, which will be similar to the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre. The man who will carry out the act will never be caught. He will commit suicide to sanctify God's name.

'Islamic Extremists' Threaten Reprisals for Hebron

NC2502175794 Paris AFP in English 1736 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Gaza City, Feb 25 (AFP)—Two Islamic fundamentalist groups threatened to kill more Jews in revenge for the massacre of 52 Palestinians by one or more settlers in a West Bank mosque on Friday.

'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement HAMAS, warned: "Very soon Israel will be in mourning and put up black flags because 'Izz-al-Din will strike harder than even the Zionist terrorists can imagine."

Islamic Jihad said: "The blood of the people will not be shed for nothing.

"The bullets of the Islamic fighters will be our immediate answer to the Zionists."

In their statements, the fundamentalists joined the Palestine Liberation Organization's call for three days of mourning and a general strike throughout the occupied territories.

The mosque massacre sparked widespread clashes between Palestinians and Israeli troops who shot dead nine protestors and wounded scores more.

Goldstein Reportedly Beaten To Death by Worshipers

TA2502210894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Barukh Goldstein, the man who perpetrated the murder in the Cave of the Patriarchs, was beaten to death, apparently by enraged Arab worshipers. These are the conclusions of a preliminary investigation carried out by the police investigators. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky was informed by the Judaea District Police that Goldstein's skull was crushed by blows; there were no gunshots to his body. The Police therefore rule out the possibility that Goldstein was shot or that he committed suicide, and apparently there will be no need to carry out an autopsy.

Buried, Praised in Qiryat Arba'

TA2702183094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Barukh Goldstein was buried in Qiryat Arba' this evening after a funeral procession from Jerusalem. The burial site at Qiryat Arba' is temporary, and his body will be moved eventually to the Jewish cemetery in Hebron. Speakers eulogizing Goldstein praised both the man and his actions. Mark Weiss was at the funeral:

[Weiss] Eulogies were recited at the Shamgar funeral parlor in Jerusalem and at the yeshiva in Qiryat Arba', and the message at both venues was militant and uncompromising. Speakers praised the massacre as a selfless act committed on behalf of the Jewish people as a whole. The victims were described not as innocent worshipers, but as the people who stabbed innocent Jews and the descendants of the Hebron residents who murdered almost the entire Jewish population of the town in 1929. A million Arabs are not worth the fingernail of one Jew, said one of the speakers. We are all Goldstein, shouted one of the mourners at one stage. Again and again, the speakers denounced the government and the media, and above all the fact that an armed Palestinian police force is about to be established. All this, together with the fact that Dr. Goldstein had repeatedly treated the victims of Arab terror combined to create a situation where he just couldn't take it any more. All the eulogizers said Goldstein should be praised as a righteous man. A few hundred people attended the eulogies in Jerusalem. Many hundreds more joined in at Qiryat Arba'. [passage omitted]

For many other mourners, the most radical elements amongst the settlers, the funeral was an occasion to come together and express solidarity. And, that was definitely the feeling of a community under siege. There was intense hostility toward journalists, and much of the talk amongst the crowd was of a witch hunt and the possibility of informers planted within the settlements.

Government Reacts to Attack at Hebron Mosque

King Husayn Denounces 'Heinous Crime'

JN2502123594 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1207 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has expressed extreme pain over and denunciation of this crime. In a statement to journalists following Friday prayers, his majesty said:

[Begin recording] I am deeply pained over the heinous crime which was perpetrated at the Ibrahimi Mosque today. We denounce and condemn this crime. Our hearts and souls are with our people and brothers in the occupied territories and Hebron. We beseech God to be with them under these difficult and hard circumstances, and to have mercy on the souls of martyrs. Concerning the incident, I reiterate my denunciation of and my extreme suffering over it. My feelings about this incident are the same as the feelings of all the believers in God and all human beings who enjoy human characteristics. We beseech Almighty God that this will mark the end of acts of violence whatever and wherever they maybe in this world. [end recording]

King Offers Condolences for Victims

JN2602164294 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Speech by King Husayn during a visit to the Hebron Charity Society in Amman on 26 February to offer condolences for the victims of the Ibrahimi Mosque attack in Hebron—recorded]

[Text] All of us here share the pain, sorrow, and sadness toward a heinous crime, the most heinous crime one can imagine could happen. This crime happened yesterday, Friday, at dawn, in this blessed month and in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque.

Those who passed away to meet with God the almighty are among the righteous martyrs and chaste ones. This consoles us and eases our pains. Here, in this gathering and in this mosque, and in any gathering that brings us together with kinsfolk and brothers who are joining us in the one objective and genuine Arab march, we are not meeting as officials and citizens. In fact, we are meeting as brothers and kinsfolk, and as members of one family. We all assume our responsibilities now and in the future, hand in hand, brothers on the path of right and success, God willing.

From this place, and on behalf of all my kinsfolk, brothers, and beloved ones, we emphasize to the kinsfolk, the brothers, and beloved ones in Hebron and in all the other occupied Palestinian territories, that we are with them, not only in these moments but in every moment in this life, in terms of patience, endurance, adherence to the land, defense of justice, and confidence in the inevitable triumph of justice in the long run. We are with the kinsfolk under hard circumstances and in confronting the continuing crucial test and suffering. We are with them with all of our resources and capabilities, the brothers, kinsfolk, and beloved ones who are the families of the martyrs and wounded, who fell as victims of this heinous crime.

Further on King's Remarks

JN2602210494 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Speech by Jordan's King Husayn during a visit to the Hebron Charity Society in Amman on 26 February to offer condolences for the victims of the Ibrahimi Mosque attack in Hebron—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord. [Koranic verse]

My presence and that of the brothers here among you, our dear kinsfolk, our men and enduring ones—knowing that we have always been one family—is something natural. [passage omitted]

We previously talked about the issue of religious jurisdiction and the need to focus on this dimension. Thus, as far as the Islamic holy places and other places and our sanctities are concerned, jurisdiction should be the responsibility of the Islamic nation as a whole. This talk was a responsible and objective one.

I believe that the sad and tragic chain, including setting fire to the al-Aqsa Mosque, repeatedly encroaching on the Christian holy places, and yesterday's tragedy, is clear proof that we can only continue to demand that this religious sovereignty be that of God the almighty alone, and also of his worshippers who are able to protect their holy places and who can vie with one another for the fear and respect of God.

O kinsfolk and brothers, be sure that we will work to the best of our ability, so heads will remain raised and will only bow to God the almighty. We will defend justice, and, as always, we will have solid positions in the face of any manifestations by some to disregard our right, the right of our kinsfolk and brothers on their national soil.

There was much talk about peace. We sincerely and honestly proceeded toward peace. However, it should be an honorable and just peace which will be accepted by the coming generations. It is not, and will not be, capitulation.

God knows the magnitude of the pressures we are facing. You are well aware of the challenges and dangers we faced in the past and which we are facing now with clear vision and cooperation. We are the pioneers of those who call for Arab convergence, cooperation, fraternity, honesty, and good faith, and we will continue to be so. O kinsfolk, brothers, and dear ones, be sure that had I personally been an obstacle to this Arab convergence, I would not have remained one moment in this position. [applause]

This speech is not a new one. Many fraternal Arab leaders heard this speech years ago. However, we will renew the call for convergence and cooperation in fulfillment of the duty toward the coming generations. We only seek to satisfy both God the almighty and our conscience. Here, with reason, awareness, and the insistence on controlling our nerves more than before. [sentence as heard] We should also organize our ranks, endure, and be ready to bear more pressures. [We should maintain] the splendid picture which used to be, and which will continue, of this (?one) family in order to face the challenges and fate of this universe. Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancor. [Koranic verse]

God bless you all. May God grant us strength to endure his will. We have not forgotten for a single moment the kinsfolk and brothers, nor will we forget for one moment our duties toward them. We will optimally do what we can, with God's help. May you be safeguarded by God, the protector of the march. God the almighty is the one who grants success. We hope we will constantly meet in better circumstances than these ones.

Once again, we all extend to the dear and beloved kinsfolk and brothers in Hebron much love, appreciation, and pride in their steadfastness. We also extend all sentiments of sharing, which we will embody to the best of our ability at present and in the future, and under all circumstances, in terms of bearing what they have endured and facing what they continue to endure. We are with them, with God's help. May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

Prime Minister Denounces 'Criminal Act'

JN2502115194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Jordan has denounced the criminal act that was carried out by one of the settlers against innocent Muslim worshipers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the occupied city of Hebron at dawn today. Hundreds of Palestinian citizens were murdered or wounded in this act.

In a statement to the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali described what happened at the Ibrahimi Mosque as an unprecedented crime, and as an indication of fanaticism, extremism, and lack of respect for human rights and sanctities.

Dr. al-Majali said that this criminal act constitutes a huge obstacle on the road to achieving a just and comprehensive peace, which Jordan has been tirelessly seeking to achieve. He stressed the need for a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and for the removal of settlements as a guarantee to prevent the recurrence of such criminal acts that are in conflict with all humanitarian and religious values.

Dr. al-Majali said: At this time, when our region is witnessing immense events, we are in a dire need for a unity of stands and ranks on the Arab and Islamic levels in order to be able to confront challenges.

In his own name and on behalf of the Jordanian Government, Dr. al-Majali extended condolences to the Palestinian leadership and to our people in the occupied territories. He said: We consider the misfortune of our people in Palestine as our own misfortune.

Foreign Affairs Minister Condemns Attack

JN2502120894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] In a statement made earlier today to Jordan television's live program "Good Morning Jordan," Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, Jordanian minister of state for foreign affairs denounced the painful, criminal incident in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. [video first shows picture of al-Hasan then clips from program]

[Begin al-Hasan recording] First of all, I wish to express the Jordanian Government's strong condemnation of the criminal massacre committed this morning against innocent, unarmed Palestinian citizens inside the Ibrahimi Mosque, a house of God, and one of the most sacred places for the Muslim nation. This condemnable crime, committed against worshipers in the middle of Holy Ramadan, has shaken us and every single Arab, Muslim, and individual in the world. It should not be allowed to go by as a passing incident. The world must view it as a result of the arming of fanatical settlers. Jordan has always warned against the serious consequences that arming settlers would have on the peace process. Israel, the world, and the international institutions must bear their responsibilities and immediately act to put an end to the terrorist acts of the settlers. This, of course, means that, first, these criminals must be punished and that they be disarmed to prevent such incidents in the future, and even the removing of settlements all together from the occupied Arab territories.

As we extend to our kinsfolk in occupied, steadfast Hebron, and to the families of the martyrs our warmest condolences, we in Jordan warn the world that this incident and several others in the past only exemplify the consequences of the occupation of the Palestinian territory and the prevention of the Palestinian people from exercising theirs right on their soil. The world must bear the responsibility to stop these incidents by ensuring the achievement of an honorable, comprehensive settlement that will lead to Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and granting the Palestinian people their legitimate rights. [end recording]

Envoys Summoned; Israel 'Fully Responsible'

JN2502151394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] As soon as it received word about the criminal incident against innocent, defenseless Palestinian citizens in the holy Ibrahimi mosque at dawn today, the Jordanian Government held intensive contacts with Arab, Islamic, and friendly states, and with international organizations, to express its strong denunciation and condemnation of this incident. In its contacts, the Jordanian Government held Israel responsible for the incident and its consequences. It urged the international community to assume its responsibilities toward putting an end to suFh acts that desecrate holy places, terrorize secure citizens, and escalate violence.

In this context, Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, summoned separately the ambassadors of the UN permanent member states—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China, and Russia—the ambassador of Greece, in its capacity as the current chairman of the European Union, and the ambassador of Indonesia, the current chairman of the Nonaligned Movement, to his office in the Foreign Ministry. He conveyed to them the Jordanian Government's condemnation and denunciation of this criminal incident against innocent, defenseless worshipers and the violation of the sanctity of holy places. The Jordanian Government held Israel fully responsible for this massacre and urged it to conduct an immediate investigation, since it provides for the settlers' weapons, freedom of movement, and access to holy places.

Three-Day Mourning Period Announced

JN2502184594 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] By order of His Majesty King Husayn, the Hashemite Royal Court announces a period of mourning beginning tomorrow, 16 of Ramadan, corresponding to 26 February, and for three days, for the souls of the martyrs who fell at dawn today while praying at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

While deploring this grotesque crime, the Royal Court beseeches God to have mercy on the martyrs' souls and grant their families and the Arab and Islamic nations patience and solace. From God we came and to God we will return.

The Council of Ministers will hold a session at 2100 [1900 GMT] today to discuss the deplorable attack and crime in the Ibrahimi Mosque, the measures to be taken by the government toward this crime, and the continuing contacts which the government began this morning with the ambassadors of the members of the UN Security Council's permanent member states, the nonaligned group, and the European Community.

Cabinet Issues Statement on 'Crime'

JN2602075994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] On the directives of His Majesty King Husayn, the Council of Ministers held an extraordinary session yesterday evening to examine the dimensions of the terrible crime perpetrated by the Israeli settlers at dawn yesterday against worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in the occupied city of Hebron.

The prime minister reviewed all dimensions of the criminal act and the Arab, Islamic, and international reactions as well as the impact of this incident on the peace process. He also reviewed the measures adopted by the Jordanian Government on the local, Arab, and international levels in view of the magnitude of the tragedy in the Ibrahimi Mosque, indicating that this incident conflicts with all human, religious, spiritual, and ethical values. Dr. al-Majali explained the urgent contacts the Jordanian Government held with all concerned parties.

The minister of state for foreign affairs briefed the Council of Ministers on his summoning of the ambassadors of the Security Council permanent member states and the Greek and Indonesian ambassadors in their capacity as chairmen of the EEC and the Nonaligned Movement respectively. He communicated to the envoys the Jordanian Government's denunciation of this ugly inhuman crime and demanded their countries shoulder their responsibility toward protecting the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, providing security to them, and forcing Israel to abide by the UN resolutions, withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, and dismantle the Israeli settlements as guarantees for the continuation of the peace process and the establishment of a just, permanent, and comprehensive peace as aspired by the peoples of the region.

The Council of Ministers announced a three-day mourning in the kingdom in condemnation of the ugly crime. Flags will fly at half mast over the ministries and both the official and popular departments. The government decided to suspend work today for two hours from 1200 to 1400 in solidarity with the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories. The Council of Ministers also decided to offer donations to the martyrs' families to alleviate their suffering as a show of solidarity with them at this sorrowful time. The ministers also decided to make personal donations.

The Council of Ministers decided to form a higher national committee to supervise the collection of donations to the martyrs' families and the wounded. It will be chaired by the Chief Justice and consist of the secretary general of the Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ministry, the secretary general of the Social Development Ministry, the director general of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, the chairman of the Welfare Societies Union, a representative from the Chamber of Commerce, and another from the Chamber of Industry. It was also decided to form committees to collect donations in all Jordanian governorates. These will be chaired by the administrative officers. Medical aid and urgent assistance will be extended to the wounded. Medicine and medical supplies will be sent to all West Bank hospitals. The Council also decided to pursue contacts with sisterly and friendly states in order to adopt the necessary measures to prevent the recurrence of such ugly crimes and intensify diplomatic efforts to guarantee the Israeli withdrawal so that the Palestinian people can exercise their legitimate rights on their soil and achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

At the conclusion of its session, the Council of Ministers issued the following statement:

The Council of Ministers became acquainted with the news of the Jewish settlers' sinful criminal attack on defenseless worshipers in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron during the dawn prayers—an attack which resulted in the martyrdom and injury of a large number of worshipers. The Council of Ministers expresses its profound denunciation and vehement condemnation of this terrible massacre. This massacre, unprecedented in savageness, targeted the innocent worshipers in this blessed month and in one of the holiest shrines. It was a continuation of a chain of inhuman attacks and violations targeting the Palestinian people. Jordan has long warned against the grave consequences of such attacks and violations on security, stability, and the peace process.

Israel must bear full responsibility for this action, put an end to all kinds and forms of terrorist acts, particularly those perpetrated by the Jewish settlers, disarm the settlers, remove settlements, and secure the protection of Palestinians in the occupied territories. The Council of Ministers also appeals to the international community and both world and humanitarian bodies to shoulder their responsibilities and prevent such incidents by guaranteeing the protection of the Palestinian people, securing their legitimate rights, and seeking a just and comprehensive settlement that ends the conflict and guarantees Israel's withdrawal from all the Palestinian and Arab territories, headed by holy Jerusalem.

The Council of Ministers, while extending deepest sympathy and condolences to the patient and steadfast kinsfolk and brothers in Hebron and the occupied territories and to the martyrs' families, stresses the solidarity of Jordan—king, government, and people—with them in confronting such measures and violations. It stresses that it stands by their side in their just and legitimate struggle. The occurrence of such incidents requires us to unify efforts, close ranks, overcome Arab differences, and realize a unified Arab position based on pan-Arab constants and capable of advancing the peace process in order to achieve a just and lasting peace that will return rights to their owners and that is acceptable to future generations.

The Council of Ministers, while addressing the sons of the one Jordanian family, who were distressed by this serious incident, hopes that this will be an occasion for further cohesion and national unity in order to confront challenges and deal with them with wisdom, reflection, and reason.

Politicians, Others Condemn Massacre

JN2602135694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Feb 94 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Maryam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—Political and community leaders reacted vehemently Friday [25 February] to the massacre of over at least 60 Palestinians at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron and called on Jordanians to observe three days of mourning and calling for an end to peace negotiations with Israel on all fronts.

"We call on all Jordanians to let black flags fly over their homes for three days and to abstain from working for a symbolic ¼ of an hour Saturday in commemoration of the martyrs," read the announcement distributed by the professional associations and leftist, pan-Arab and Islamist political parties. The groups announced that a march would be held Suunday at 14:40 from the professional unions building to the al-Hashimiyah Square in downtown Amman to mark "the anger in our hearts and our rejection of the peace process as it stands."

Leaders of political parties, popular unions and organisations as well as members of Parliament and Palestinian activists met Friday to declare their outrage at the massacre in a heated atmosphere which brought tears to the eyes of many and would-be fistfights on several occasions.

Less than an hour after news of the attack was broadcast, representatives and members of Jordanian and Palestinian popular unions and organisations marched from the professional associations complex in al-Shmaysani to the Red Cross office asking for international protection for Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

Almost simultaneously after the noon prayers demonstrations broke out in several Palestinian refugee camps in greater Amman and al- Baq'ah.

In the al-Baq'ah refugee camp, Lower Houser member Muhammad 'Uwaydah and Islamic Action Front representative Muhammad Abu-Faris joined demonstrators in condemning the attack and calling for an end to the peace process.

But the IAF was not the only group to call for an obrogation of the peace process.

Wahid al-Ja'bari, president of the Khalil al-Rahman society, also known as the Hebron Community Society, called on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to "resign immediately." There should be an immediate vote of no confidence for Yasir

'Arafat and anyone involved in the peace negotiations." Mr. al-Ja'bari told fellow Hebronites gathered at the society in a massive condolence ceremony for the relatives of the victims of the massacre.

Mr. al-Ja'bari, a Hebron notable known for his close ties to the Jordanian government rather than the PLO leadership, said "all Palestinians should withdraw from the negotiations."

Mr. al-Ja'bari headed rows of Hebronites receiving condolences from Jordanian government officials, foreign diplomats as well as political party heads and leaders of popular organisations, union and professional association heads.

Lower House of Parliament Speaker Tahir al-Masri visited the society shortly after news of the massacre spread through Amman. "The speaker gave us his condolences and expressed his outrage at the massacre." Mr. al-Ja'bari said.

But not all visits by officials to the Khalil al-Rahman Society were well received. Leading members of the PLO such as 'Abbas Zaki, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council Salim al-Za'nun and FIDA representative in Amman Salih Ra'fat were booed and Mr. Ra'fat was physically attacked during his visit.

The three Palestinian officials were not held welcome because they represent the negotiators who are responsible for the massacre, said one Hebronite. the three were rushed out of the society under protection.

The attack on Mr. Ra'fat came after Lower House Member Shaykh 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-Zant called for the "liquidation of the PLO and the establishment of an Islamic leadership for the Palestinian people."

A member of the Palestine Central Council, Mr. Ra'fat stood up calling for "national unity in this time of mourning." A member of the audience subsequently "got up and rushed towards Mr. Ra'fat attempting to throw him on the ground," one observer told the Jordan Times.

The attacker was taken away by other members of the audience and expelled from the main hall of the society.

Nominal head of the IAF 'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah brought many members of the audience to tears with an eloquent speech in which he referred to historic Muslim rights in Hebron and the "humiliation of the all Muslims on this day."

"As our brethren kneeled at dawn to pray, they becaome martyrs and we must join them in their jihad to regain the Bayt al-Maqdis," said Shaykh Khalifah.

"It is our jihad against the "world Zionist conspiracy lead by U.S. President Bill Clinton," said Mr. Khalifah. "This proves once and for all that the peace negotiations are dead," added head of the IAF Executive Committee Ishaq al-Farhan.

Amman based Hamas officials Ibrahim Ghawshah and political bureau members Musa Abu-Marzuq addressed audiences in the Khalil al-Rahman Society and in the professional Associations complex.

But not all Palestinian parties which have operating offices in Jordan blamed Friday's massacre on the PLO and the negotiations. The Palestine People's Party, one of the three party's along with the mainstream Fatah and FIDA to participate in the peace talks, put the blame for the massacre firmly in the Israeli camp.

"We hold the Israel government and security forces responsible for Friday's massacre," said a statement by the party.

The group called on a halt to negotiations till "settlers are disarmed and international protection is provided for Palestinians under occupation. [no closing quotation marks as published]

Participants in a meeting held at the professional Associations complext called for the donation of one day's wages to the families of persons killed or wounded in the massacre and urged the organisation of a blood donation drive for the wounded.

The participants, who included representatives of political and private organisations, also called for the secondment of a medical delegation to the occupied territories to offer medical assistance to the wounded and called for discussing the prospect of bringing to Jordan wounded Palestinians to receive treatment in Jordan.

Al-Majali Briefs Senate

JN2602133094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The Senate held an extraordinary session today under the chairmanship of Ahmad al-Lawzi. During the session, Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali briefed the Senate on the government contacts on the massacre perpetrated by the Israeli settlers in the Ibrahimi Mosque yesterday. The Senate then issued a statement condemning the ugly crime.

[Begin al-Majali recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Brother members of the honorable Senate: I would like to stress the feelings of the government, which fully supports all that was said in this honorable Senate this morning. We want to inform the Senate that denunciation—and I think this happens for the first time in the history of this cause—has come from all parties: The European and American parties and even the Israeli leadership regardless of whether this Israeli denunciation is a fact or a cover. But this is the first time such a denunciation occurs in the manner we all have heard. It is natural that upon the directives of his majesty the king, contacts were held on the Arab, Islamic, and international levels and the third world states. The ambassadors were summoned and informed of the importance and seriousness of this incident and its impact on the entire peace process. The crime is unprecedented in history. It was killing in cold blood, not killing in which there was resistance. They were in the mosque praying. Therefore, this takes a world dimension. We should act on the information, press, and diplomatic levels so that this fact reaches all western minds continuously and persistently in order to be greatly influential.

We were informed that the Americans are taking this issue very seriously and they denounce it. Hence, they supported an old request made by Jordan to hold the negotiations in one place and to hold them continuously until results are achieved. I think the U.S. President's call on Israel and the president of the Palestinian state to send all delegations to Washington is meant to discuss this matter very seriously. We hope this is so.

On this occasion, we insist that the root cause of these terrorist acts and killings is the occupation of land and the construction of settlements. Therefore, we now insist that the settlements, as we insisted in all our negotiations, are the obstacle. In all their statements, the United States and the West also said that. But they might not have felt the seriousness of this issue except after the perpetration of this crime yesterday.

Moreover, the UN Security Council met. We supported this meeting, in which discussions and deliberations are still continuing.

As for what concerns us here, the government announced an official three-day mourning. It set up a fund for donations. As you see, members of the Senate are offering their contributions. Moreover, the government allocated 100,000 Jordanian dinars, in addition to His Majesty King Husayn's donation of another 100,000 Jordanian dinars. A full campaign will be launched in support of our kinsfolk in the occupied territories. One of the things from which they suffer is the financial aspect. We should not forget this. Unfortunately, for a long time our kinsfolk have not had financial support adequate to enable them to have at least the basic requirements.

Therefore, we hope this support by the Senate will enhance this and be able to reach those who need it. The committee [as heard] is comprised of both the private and public sectors. The government will continue all its measures based on our stands in Washington. We told the head of the delegation there to convey our full feelings and to observe the situation in order to adopt a united stand with the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese brothers on the issue of negotiations there. We believe that if the Americans commit us and force Israel to sit continuously and act in a serious manner, perhaps the harmful incident might help in finding a solution or reaching clearly defined measures soon. We will keep the Senate informed of any further developments.

As for the security situation, about 5,000 people are currently staging a march at al-Husayni Mosque. However, it is a peaceful march. Community colleges and universities closed down. In al- Baq'ah, about 5,000 people staged a march toward Suwaylih. Some of them returned, while others are still there. There is a march of about 400 people in al-Zarqa'. A march staged at 'Azmi al-Mufti camp is over. People at the Jerash camp are on their way to hold a prayer for the dead. There are small gatherings in various parts of the country.

We support all forms of expression. However, we are afraid of marches because various elements get involved. As everyone knows, those with different views unfortunately take advantage of marches to carry out acts of violence that we can do without. Let the marches be peaceful and strong and let the support be in its right place.

The government called on the Arab world to close ranks because this will enable us to avoid such an incident and obtain our rights. We call for and fully support holding an Arab summit. We support your request to hold a meeting of Arab parliaments in order to adopt a stand toward this incident.

Thank you, sir. [end recording]

Senate 'Vehemently' Condemns Incident

JN2602174294 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1520 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, 26 Feb (PETRA)—The Senate has vehemently condemned the heinous crime carried out by Zionist extremists. Hundreds of innocent martyrs and wounded people among Hebron's citizens fell victims to this crime at dawn yesterday.

The Senate met in an extraordinary session this morning, attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali and other ministers. The session was devoted to discussing the dimensions of this crime.

Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi said the terrible crime perpetrated by fanatic Israeli settlers at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron at dawn yesterday—in which hundreds of innocent martyrs and wounded people fell as victims—makes it necessary to draw lessons and explore the results this terrible event implies and the dangers and challenges it poses.

Al-Lawzi said the extraordinary session is a contribution by the Senate to the efforts of his majesty, the homeland's leader and the faithful one Jordanian family. This session will allow brother senators to exchange views and consultations. They will contribute to enhancing Jordan's honest march and national unity in view of this barbaric crime, and to consolidating Jordan's pan-Arab responsibilities. Jordan has never failed to assume these, in terms of supporting the Palestine question and the Palestinian people's struggle to regain their rights and achieve self-determination on their national soil and secure the implementation of international legitimacy in order to realize a just and comprehensive peace that ends occupation and removes the settlements.

The Senate later observed one minute of silence for the martyrs. The senators read the opening chapter of the Holy Koran for the martyrs' chaste souls.

House Condemns 'Mournful Event'

JN2602172794 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1555 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, 26 Feb (PETRA)—The House of Representatives has condemned the massacre during dawn prayers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron yesterday. This took place at the extraordinary session the House held this afternoon under Speaker Tahir al-Masri, attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, to discuss the results of the reprehensible massacre Zionist extremists carried out against defenseless worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

At the start of the session, al-Masri said yesterday's incident is a mournful and momentous event. Although what the Zionists had perpetrated against the people in Hebron is not the first of its kind that the Palestinians and Muslims have experienced at the hands of the Zionist aggressors, the manner in which it was carried out, in a safe and sacred place, adds to the harm done to one's sentiments and makes it stand out as a very strange incident.

Al-Masri added: If our relatives in the occupied territories cannot be safe in their mosques and during their prayers, then where can they be safe?

Arab Nation Urged To Confront Aggression

JN2702113794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Feb 94 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Ayman al-Safadi]

[Excerpt] Amman—The Lower House of Parliament Saturday strongly condemned "the ugly massacre committed by the Zionist authorities through its settlers" against Palestinian worshipers in the Cave of Patriarchs in Hebron on Friday and urged international protection for Palestinians in the occupied territories.

"As it condemns this crime and the conspiracy of the Israeli occupation forces with the settlers as well as the conspiracy of the hegemonous forces with the occupation, the (House) declares that it is time for Arab awakening," the deputies said.

"Statements of condemnations will not relieve the nation of its duty," the House said in a statement issued hours after the end of a special session held to discuss what House Speaker Tahir al-Masri called a serious event and a huge massacre.

"Statements of condemnations have become abundant and so have international decisions...but the Zionist enemy continues to shed Palestinian blood," the statement said.

The House urged the Arab and Muslim nations "to confront the aggression, overcome their differences and unify their stands because (all Arab countries) are targetted."

In the statement, which was drafted by the House's permanent office, deputies urged Arab and Muslim countries to move on the international level and at the U.N. Security Council to have the international community stand up to the "aggression and demand that Israel withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and provide protection to the Palestinians until the pullout is completed."

The House called on Arab and international parliaments to condemn the continuous Israeli crimes against the Palestinians and guarantee their rights, mainly their right to self-determination.

While expressing appreciation of the immediate steps the government took in reaction to the massacre, the deputies urged the executive authority to increase its efforts to guarantee Arab, Muslim and international support for the Palestinians.

During the session, lawmakers said the massacre emphasises the necessity of concrete measures to protect Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories but differed on how it should affect the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The 16-member Islamic Action Front (IAF) bloc said the House should demand that the government withdraw from the negotiations but failed to get a House vote on its bid after other deputies argued its constitutionality.

The House must call on the government "to abandon the bilateral and multilateral negotiations and move towards preparing the people to support our armed forces in the coming battle of honour," deputy Hamzah Mansur said in a speech on behalf of the IAF bloc.

"The criminal act has proven the correctness of the position of the IAF and other national, pan-Arab and Islamic forces... that it is impossible to coexist with the Jewish enemy and that (the peace process) consolidates the occupation of our lands and holy places," the IAF said.

Mr. al-Masri argued against putting the IAF bid to vote on the grounds that such an important decision should not be taken after a "hasty and superficial discussion," pointing out that the session was specifically called to discuss the massacre and not the policies of the government. [passage omitted]

Marches Staged in Amman To Protest Hebron Attack

JN2702121794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Feb 94 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Maryam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—Gloom, shock and anger hung over Amman Saturday as flags flew at half mast, many schoolchidren staged sporadic protest marches and a two-hour closure to mourn the victims of Friday's Hebron massacre.

Jordanians of all backgrounds showed their outrage by taking to the streets in one of the most spontaneous public outbursts of anger since the Gulf war. In Irbid, al-Salt, al-Baq'ah and all over Amman, men, women and children took to the streets waving black and green as well as Palestinian flags, shouting Islamic slogans and calling for an end to "negotiations with the enemy."

"No need to speak with those who murder us. Speak their language, the language of jihad," said a speaker at the al-Husayn Mosque during noon prayers Saturday.

Speaking to a crowd of some 2,500 people gathered in the downtown square in front of the mosque after marching from different districts of Amman, the speakers urged Muslims to "return to your faith and become defenders of the faith in Palestine as in Bosnia."

"The trio that betrayed you," (Israel Prime Minister Yitzhaq) Rabin, (U.S. President Bill) Clinton and (Palestine leader Yasir) 'Arafat must not be allowed to pave the way of our future," said one speaker from inside the mosque whose address was broadcast through loudspeakers.

Police sealed off much of downtown and traffic came to a halt while the speakers addressed the crowd.

A heavy police presence was visible all over the city. Embassies, foreign banks and many other international organisations, fearing emotional reprisal owing to their foreign affiliations, reported a security alert. The day passed without incident, however.

Numerous Amman groceries, many of them owned by natives of Hebron, closed for the entire day to mark the first day after the killings.

All shops downtown were closed and black flags flew from the shutters of many.

The crowd at the al-Hashimiyah Square in downtown continued their march and converged at the Roman amphitheatre at around 1:30 p.m. and dispersed soon afterwards. The demonstrations were organised by the Islamic Action Front and a group of pan-Arab leftist parties.

Schoolchidren who were let out of school at 12:00 p.m. began demonstrations in their local neighbourhoods. Students at the University of Jordan also staged a protest.

Groups of 40 to 60 schoolchildren could be seen Saturday in various parts of al-Shumaysani, downtown, Jabal al-Taj and al-Jawfah, Garden Street and Bayadir Wadi al-Sir as well as the al-Baq'ah and al-Wahdat camps raising the Palestinian flag and shouting slogans to protest Friday's killings.

A group of some 60 students with green arm bands shouting "there is no god but God," converged on the closed American embassy in 'Abdun ini the morning hours but were turned back by American embassy guards and police. It was the first reported group of protestors to converge on the embassy, built two years ago. The group left no statement and did not identify themselves, according to embassy staff.

Jordanian papers ran eight column headlines of Friday's killing with explicit pictures of the victims. Akhir Khabar, a liberal Jordanian daily, ran one of the most stunning headlines—"shalom"—acroos its frontpage along with a blown-up picture of a dead man with his mouth open and blood running out.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, Saturday vowed to step up the armed struggle against Israel and carry out revenge attacks for Friday's killings.

"Yes to the revolution of the knives," Hamas spokesman Muhammad Nazzal told a press conference.

The movement called on the Palestine Liberation Organisation to immediately withdraw from the negotiations with Israel.

"We call on 'Arafat to withdraw and for the negotiators to withdraw immediately," said one head of Hamas in Jordan, Ibrahim Ghawshah. "The Palestinian people know who they are and where they are," he said of negotiators living in the West Bank and Amman. It is clear that the negotiation option is not the option of the Palestinian people but a people-less leadership in Tunis.

"It is a shame that 'Arafat is planning to go to Washington with 30 people before the blood of the martyrs has even had the chance to dry. It shows his disrepect for the suffering of his people," Mr. Ghawshah added.

"Rabin is responsible for security and occupation. So this is his domain," concluded Mr. Ghawshah. "But the blood of the Palestinian people will be avenged."

Protesters Call For 'Arafat Ouster

JN2802112494 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 94 p 10

[By an unidentified JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Nearly 4,000 people marched through the heart of Amman Sunday [27 February] rejecting the

28-month-old Middle East peace process and calling for the downfall of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

The peaceful protest was called to express condemnation of Friday's massacre of more than 60 Palestinians by one or more Jewish settlers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the Israeli-occupied West Bank town of Hebron.

But it turned to a highly politicised event to register what Islamist and leftist politicians as well as union leaders asserted was a popular rejection of any negotiated peace with Israel.

"No to peace, yes to holy war," shouted the protesters, who began their march from the central bus station at al-'Abdali and dispersed at the al-Hashimiyah square in downtown Amman after brief speeches by leaders of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and leftist organisations as well as heads of professional associations.

The speakers severely assailed Mr. 'Arafat and his peacemaking strategy with Israel and demanded that all Arab parties, including Jordan and the PLO, withdraw immediately from the peace talks.

Police kept a tight watch over the marchers, who included around 200 veiled women, but did not interfere. No violent incidents were reported.

Banners wielded by the protesters, some of them masked and others holding aloft the Holy Koran, denounced the massacre and said: "No to surrender, no to negotiations," "Revenge, revenge," "armed struggle is our only choice," and "no for self-rule."

The marchers condemned Mr. 'Arafat for accepting the Sept. 13 autonomy agreement with Israel and demanded that he be ousted from the chairmanship of the PLO.

"Yes to the PLO, no to 'Arafat," said the protesters.

Addressing the PLO chairman, they chanted: "Your day of judgement is coming."

It was the latest rally to be held in Amman following the Hebron massacre, and was higher in political intensity than any other demonstration held since Friday, save another hardline protest march held in the al-Baq'ah camp Saturday.

Earlier Sunday, a group of about 150 school students marched through the Jabal al-Husayn refugee camp to condemn the mosque massacre and vowing revenge.

The centrist al-Mustaqbal party, led by Sulayman 'Arar, issued a statement on Sunday describing the Hebron killings as "a Ramadan gift by the Zionists to the Muslim and Arab people."

The massacre should serve as a reminder to those who are engaged in peace talks with Israel that "there cannot be peace and security in the region as the racist state (Israel) exists among them."

"Retribution in kind, not condemnation and statements, is the answer to this crime and other crimes committed by the Zionists against the Palestinians and Arabs... starting with (the 1948) Dayr Yasin massacre and (the 1982 killings at) Sabra and Shatilla and the (1968) burning of al-Aqsa Mosque," said the statement.

Jordan is observing a three-day national mourning that ends Tuesday for the victims of the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque and the government is also raising funds to help the families of those killed and wounded in the attack.

British Tourist Stabbed

JN2502143094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] A responsible source at the Interior Ministry has said that in the wake of the criminal massacre that took place at dawn today at the Ibrahimi Mosque, some marches were staged in Amman to protest the heinous crime committed by Israeli settlers against pious worshipers in Hebron.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, the source said Khalid Husni al-Qurashi attacked (Lon Edwards), a British tourist, at the Hashimite Square at noon today and stabbed him with a knife. The tourist was immediately rescued. He is now in a good condition. The assailant was arrested.

The Interior Ministry expresses its understanding of the overwhelming feelings that accompanied the grave event that took place at the Ibrahimi Mosque today. It, however, urges citizens to exercise self-restraint and close ranks so the feelings of support for our people in the occupied homeland will not turn into irresponsible, instantaneous reactions that harm our feelings and our just cause.

Donation Campaign for Families of Victims Launched

JN2702213294 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 27 Feb 94

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] Jordan has raised tens of thousands of dinars to support the victims of Friday's [25 February] Hebron Mosque massacre. His majesty the king had spearheaded a nationwide fundraising campaign and donated 100,000 dinars to support the families of the Palestinians killed by the Jewish settler.

The government announced a similar donation in addition to private donations from cabinet ministers, civil servants, deputies, and senators.

Three popular fundraising committees reported warm public response to calls for helping the victims' families. Amman Mayor Mamduh al-'Abbadi, who heads a popular committee helping the Palestinians, said it would give 1,000 dinars to each of the families of Palestinians killed in the mosque and the ensuing violence. He said the committee would also give 300 dinars to families of the Palestinians injured in the mosque massacre.

Mr. 'Abbadi told REUTERS that the committee offered to treat the Palestinian victims at Jordanian hospitals.

Paper Blames U.S., Israel Blamed for Attack

JN2702180394 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Feb 94 p 2

["Issue and Opinion" column: "Israel and U.S. To Blame for the Bloody Dawn Massacre", by Salamah 'Ukur]

[Text] It should be quite obvious now—both to the Palestinians and the whole world—that cohabitation between the Palestinians and Jewish settlers in Gaza and the West Bank is unthinkable. Accordingly, there is a need to rethink the Oslo, Davos, and Cairo agreements, as well as the Gazaz-Jericho accord itself. The proposed phased settlement on the Israeli-Palestinian track—envisaging an interim five-year period followed by a final settlement, the outlines of which are by no means clear—also needs to be reexamined. Inevitably, then, the Palestinian leadership will have to back out from a stage-by-stage settlement that it concluded with Israel under U.S. pressure. Having done that, the Palestinian leadership will have to push for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as Resolution 181, which calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The Palestinian leadership has a strong case to advance to the U.S. sponsor of the peace process and the international community; namely, that the U.S. initiative and the Madrid conference were launched on the basis of UN resolutions, the land-for-peace formula, and the Palestinian people's national legitimate rights.

The international community, including the powerful, permanent members of the UN Security Council, are now all too aware that Palestinians in the occupied territories are being subjected to a genocidal effort. Hence, it is not reasonable to act as if nothing has happened and carry on with the negotiations with Israel while the physical liquidation of the Palestinians continues, especially since there is not a single piece of evidence for an Israeli willingness to pull out from the entire Gaza Strip and the West Bank and Jerusalem. Nor is there any indication that Israel is willing to entertain the idea of an independent Palestinian state—now or in the future. All of which is not lost on the Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who has indicated that he is not pursuing an independent Palestinian state, but a confederation with Jordan!

That being the case—in other words, since the Palestinian leadership has renounced the right to self-determination and an independent state as stipulated by UN resolutions—why not walk out of a sham peace exercise holding no promise of fulfilling Palestinian rights?

The Palestinian leadership has exhausted its bargaining chips at the negotiating table with Israel and failed to get anything of significance in the way of the national rights of the Palestinian people. This is because it did not treat UN resolutions, or the Madrid conference and the land-for-peace formula as a point of reference. Instead of giving an affirmative response to President Clinton's invitation for Palestinian and Israeli negotiators to go to Washington to conclude a final deal, which, in any case, can by no means advance national, legitimate Palestinian rights, the Palestinian leadership might have suspended the talks, or attached courageous strings to their resumption.

It is worth recalling here Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' remark that Israel was negotiating with itself and dictating terms.

I will go so far as to call on the Palestinian leadership to withdraw from the peace process if only to keep from bargaining away Palestinian rights. I will call on the Palestinian leadership to let Jordan and Egypt negotiate the future of the West bank and Gaza on its behalf, since the two territories were caputured from Jordan and Egypt. The two countries can conduct the negotiations on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 stipulating Israeli withdrawal from all the territories Israel conquered in June, 1967.

If Israel has an interest in true and comprehensive peace, it will have to pull out from all occupied Arab territories—the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and south Lebanon—in compliance with Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

If the United States wants to make a go of its peace initiative and see durable peace, security, and stability prevail in the region, it will have to talk or coerce Israel into complying with the UN resolutions on the basis of which its initiative and the Madrid conference were launched.

I believe the Palestinian leadership must acknowledge its failure to regain Palestinian rights, and then go on to entrust this historic and momentous mission to Jordan and Egypt, both of which are better positioned to do the job. With the right amount of coordination and solidarity, the cordon states—Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon—can regain the occupied Arab territories. Subsequently, the Palestinian leadership can take the initiative and claim self-determination from Jordan and Egypt, and the Palestinian people can exercise their rights either by setting up their own independent state, forging confederal or federal ties, or entering into an outright merger with any of the cordon states. Obviously such a move on the part of the Palestinian leadership calls for a rare degree of courage.

I dare say that such a courageous stand would win the support of the political and popular circles in the Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic communities. Will the Palestinian leadership take inspiration from the holy month of Ramadan and summon the courage to do the right thing, and thus rob Israel of the chance of keeping up its genocidal effort against the Palestinian people?

The bloody dawn's massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque is a meaningful lesson that ought to be learned.

The Palestinian leadership and the Arab nation must hold Israel and the U.S. Administration responsible for the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and its consequences.

International Protection for Palestinians Urged

JN2802091394 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Feb 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "Al-Husayn Calls for a Practical Arab Response to the Bloody Massacre"]

[Excerpts] The real practical response to the bloody dawn massacre that was committed in an unprecedented odious manner in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron has come from Jordan.

The Jordanian leadership and people were not content only to condemn and denounce the reprehensible crime, organize protest demonstrations, explain its obnoxious hostile and provocative designs, and outline the intentions of those behind it but accompanied this with concrete practical measures denoting maturity, wisdom, and deliberation. His Majesty King Husayn donated 100,000 Jordanian dinars. The Government also donated 100,000 dinars. The Jordanian citizens donated goods and medicines, as well as the blood needed for the wounded.

His Majesty King Husayn's reply was a national response showing a high sense of responsibility, wisdom, and clarity of vision. The king called on the Arab leaders to shoulder their responsibilities, and to unite their ranks, actions, and stands. He also called on them to forget their differences and rise above the causes of dispute and estrangement. [passage omitted]

In any case, all the people and countries in the world and all the international organizations and bodies, including the UN Security Council and the United Nations, have come to realize that it is impossible to achieve peace in the occupied Palestinian territories with the presence of the settlements and the Jewish settlers.

It has also been proved that the Arab citizens, the Islamic holy places, and the Muslim and Christian places of worship there need international protection. This requires the dispatch of an international peacekeeping force to the occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank to protect their inhabitants and holy places. The responsibility for the bloody dawn massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque is borne by Israel and by the United States which encourages it to pursue its settlement policy. This calls for a united Arab stand to confront all these momentous challenges.

Paper: 'Real Reply' to Hebron Massacre Detailed

JN2802170294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Feb 94 p 36

["The Last Station" column by Salih al-Qallab: "This is the Reply!"]

[Text] Having closed our eyes and contemplated an appropriate reply to the Ibrahimi Mosque's massacre in Hebron, and having heard proposals and talks and read slogans, we suggest the following:

—The PLO should declare an immediate withdrawal from the peace negotiations, cancel its recognition of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, close the Palestinian ranks, gather all the small and large factions without exception into one framework, and deploy the PLO forces on all Arab borders with Palestine.

—The Arab regimes participating in the peace process should do exactly as the PLO does, close the file of negotiations forever, call on the Arab Defense Council to meet, form a unified military command, and declare war on Israel.

—The oil-producing states, including the Libyan Jamahiriyah, should cut the supplies to the Western states and turn this Arab wealth into a weapon in the battle because the Arab oil is for the entire Arab nation.

—The Arab states should ignore their differences, close their ranks, firmly support the Palestinian people, and view their international relations on the basis of the Palestine question because it is the Arabs' first and basic cause.

—The Arab states should lift the embargo on Iraq and compensate it for all the destruction inflicted on it during the second Gulf war. Moreover, the movements waging an armed war against the current regimes in Algeria and Egypt should halt this war and declare a general truce because priority should be given to the confrontation with the enemy.

—The Islamic states should declare a holy jihad, channel their forces and efforts toward the land of mobilization and steadfastness [Jordan], and abandon their previous positions, taken since Israel was established.

—The Russian nationalists and communists should topple the regime of Boris Yeltsin and reinstate the former Soviet Union, which supported the Arabs and stood against imperialist Western ambitions.

These are the elements of the real reply to Israel. Perhaps, the first and most important element, however, is to unleash the freedom of the Arab individual and allow him to have his own opinion about his future and that of his homeland—this will be the real reply.

Note: Had one-half of these demands been achieved, the State of Israel would not have been established in the first place, and no one would have dared go to Madrid, Oslo, and other cities.

Husayn Calls al-Hirawi, Denounces Church Incident

JN2702162194 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] In a telephone conversation with His Excellency Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi today, His Majesty King Husayn denounced the criminal incident that occurred in Sayyidat al-Najat church in Lebanon this morning, killing innocent worshipers.

On behalf of himself and the people and Government of Jordan, his majesty offered to his excellency the Lebanese president his sincerest condolences for the victims of the outrageous incident.

King Sends Condolatory Cable

JN2702175594 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, 27 Feb (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn has denounced the ugly criminal incident against peaceful citizens who were holding a mass at Sayyidat al-Najat church in Zuq Micha'il in Lebanon.

In a cable he sent to His Excellency Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, his majesty said the victims fell in the church as a result of a plan by a criminal mentality that is no different in its evil intentions and tendencies than the mentality that planned the massacre at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque. Following is the text of the cable:

Your Excellency Brother Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi.

May God's peace and mercy be upon you.

We received with great sadness and deep sorrow the report on the ugly criminal incident represented by an outrageous attack on peaceful citizens, who were holding Sunday mass at Sayyidat al-Najat church in Zuq Micha'il this morning, and the resulting victims from among the people of sisterly Lebanon. Those victims fell as a result of a plan by a criminal mentality which is no different in its evil intentions and tendencies than the mentality that planned the massacre of the holy Ibrahimi Mosque Friday morning, the victims of which were citizens piously performing the dawn prayers to God almighty.

As I express to you my sympathies on behalf of myself and the people and Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I ask God almighty to grant his mercy to the victims' souls. May God help you so that you may continue your benevolent march toward the advancement and progress of your homeland and toward maintaining its security and the future of its generations. May God fortify the victims' grieved families with patience.

May God's peace and mercy be upon you.

Your Brother King Husayn

Paper: Israel Behind Lebanese Church Massacre

JN2802105094 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 28 Feb 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "The Same Party Behind the Two Crimes at the Ibrahimi Mosque and the Lebanese Church"]

[Excerpt] It seems that there is a hostile scheme to drown the Arab cordon [al-tawq] states in blood.

There is no doubt that Israel and its agents are behind this odious scheme.

Israel has started to play the tune of sectarianism to sow seditions.

Israel carried out the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron and also perpetrated another reprehensible crime at the Lebanese Sayyidat al-Najat Church.

The timing of these two odious crimes is not a coincidence, but is the result of a studied and premeditated plan. In view of these crimes which have greatly pained the Jordanian leaders and people, Jordan, under his Majesty King Husayn, took the initiative and acted on all Arab, regional, and international levels to acquaint the entire international community of the hideousness of this type of terrorism, which undoubtedly is Israeli terrorism. [passage omitted]

His majesty the king was the first to realize the dimensions of this treacherous scheme that is hostile to the cordon states and to the peace process which is based on the international legitimacy resolutions. His majesty linked the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and the Lebanese Sayyidat al-Najat Church massacre, in that there is one party which planned for these two odious crimes.

His majesty also held consultations with the Lebanese and Syrian presidents to contain this odious scheme which seeks to drown the region in blood and sow sedition so as to foil it before it becomes uncontrollable. [passage omitted]

'Big Explosion' in Church Reported 27 Feb; Casualties Reported

NC2702080194 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0747 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] A horrendous crime with the proportions of a massacre was committed in the Church of Sayyidat al-Najat in Wata Zuq Mich'il a short while ago. A big explosion occurred in the church while worshipers were taking part in a mass. Initial information indicates that a large number of people were killed or injured. Casualties are being taken to the hospitals in the area, particularly the Sayyidat Lubnan Hospital, which is crowded with casualties.

The army and security forces have cordoned off the scene of the explosion and the church perimeter amid a state of panic gripping the area. Adjacent buildings were affected by the explosion along with citizens. We will give you further details as available.

8 dead, 25 Injured

NC2702085894 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0837 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Just in from the editor's desk: According to a report by the Security Forces, there are so far eight dead and 25 injured in the church explosion. The security forces reported that another explosive charge that was planted inside the church did not go off. A military expert was summoned to defuse it. This is the latest report from the security forces.

Naturally, after the explosion there was commotion and the situation is worrisome there. That is why we have been unable to obtain accurate information, because the security forces are touring the hospitals to report on the death toll and names of the casualties.

To repeat: There are eight dead and 25 injured as of now and the security forces are defusing another explosive charge that did not go off.

The other charge was certainly planted to cause a large number of casualties. The explosive charges were placed in the church to explode. This was reported by the security forces. The confirmed report is that there are eight dead and 25 injured so far.

Interior Minister Comments

NC2702095094 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0856 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Voice of Lebanon correspondent George Shahin reports form the scene of the explosion:

[Shahin] We are reporting to you from the scene of the explosion in the Zuq Musbih area, where Army, Internal Security forces, and Civil Defense units, along with other security agencies have cordoned off the area. Throngs of citizens have assembled on the highways and roads amid a heavy traffic jam. According to the information announced by the interior minister a short while ago, nine people were killed and a number of others injured in the blast. He declared that the church and the worshipers inside it have escaped a horrible massacre because not all the explosive charges planted in the church went off.

Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij inspected the scene of the explosion a short while ago, accompanied by Interior Ministry Director General Sami Shu'ayb and Central Security Secretary Lieutenant Colonel Fadl Dahir. Deputy Rushayd al-Khazin has just arrived at the scene.

The manifestations of destruction were evident as Minister Mirhij was speaking to reporters. Mirhjij said:

[Begin Mirhij recording]: If they think that they can (?tear apart) the homeland by bombing a church and killing innocent people, we tell them that the church and all places of worship are [words indistinct]. They will not be able to destroy churches, mosques, or other places of worship in Lebanon. These places are deeply valued in the hearts of our people and in our land. This crime, no matter what its effect, will absolutely not affect our domestic situation or the internal peace that we all want. Our stand and that of our people's are the same: We will secure internal unity, social peace, and stand shoulder to shoulder in one line to defend Lebanon and our democratic system:

[Reporter] What is the latest death toll?

[Mirhij] A huge explosion occurred in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Palestine. That crime left dozens dead. There are those who seek to destabilize our society from within. We say that our society is stronger than (?these attempts).

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[Mirhij] There must be [words indistinct], but this is not the proper time to determine this issue.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, having been briefed by the security agencies on the effects of the explosion, what is the latest death toll?

[Mirhij] We are not yet sure of the number of dead, but I believe there are nine dead.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[Mirhij] The explosive charge was designed to cause a big massacre, but God's care, [words indistinct] some charges went off but not all. Had all the explosive charges gone off, the result would have been devastating.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] explosive charges?

[Mirhij] We have not delved into details. This is the task of the security forces. [end recording]

[Shahin] The security forces are conducting investigations inside the church. Reporters have been forbidden to enter the church for security reasons. They will be allowed in later after the initial investigations. Destruction and devastation are evident inside and outside the church. There are no doors or windows. Cars parked nearby have been damaged, along with homes. The church is located in the Zuq Musbih area and there is heavy traffic on the highway. The Internal Security Forces are trying to facilitate traffic.

Radio Updates Casualties

NC2702110594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1040 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Excerpts] According to the latest report on the massacre that occurred in the Sayyidat al-Najat church in Zuq Micha'il, there are 10 dead and approximately 40 injured. They have been taken to hospitals in the area. Papal Nuncio Pablo Puente inspected the bombed church a short while ago. Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri also inspected the church before proceeding to Bkirki, where he is now meeting with Maronite Patriarch Sfayr. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij is now visiting casualties in the Sayyidat Lubnan Hospital in Juniyah. In a telephone call a short while ago he affirmed to us that Lebanon is stronger than such incidents and will survive through its sons' unity and cohesion. He stressed that morale is high, that the Lebanese people will adhere to their basic principles, and that no event will disturb the general national security and peace.

He said that the casualties suffer from serious injuries but morale is high, particularly among the families of the victims, doctors, and nurses. He stressed that the security forces are continuing their investigations and that sappers had managed to defuse the explosive charges that were set to explode after the initial explosion, which occurred during mass.

President, Others Comment on Church Bombing

Al-Hirawi Addresses Nation

NC2702134894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1225 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Address by President Ilyas al-Hirawi in Beirut on 27 February—recorded]

[Text] O Lebanese: Wicked hands insist on harming our innocent kinsfolk. We insist on the steadiness of the march to peace and salvation. The attempts to set us on a backward course will not succeed. The catastrophe which occurred inside the Sayyidat al-Najat Church in the Kasrawan area this morning is a naked crime that will not succeed in diverting the attention of world public opinion. One crime does not offset another crime. We address the whole world and say that the all Lebanese rally around their state and the march to peace. They are unanimous in refusing to return to the imposed and tendentious war.

We condemn this concocted incident. We have asked the security authorities and all concerned security, judiciary, and military officials to do their utmost to reveal the circumstances of the abominable incident and to announce the results of the investigations to the Lebanese people. We call for the meting out of the harshest punishment to the instigators, culprits, and accomplices and for severing every hand which tries to jeopardize security and the march of peace.

Several attempts have surfaced in the past weeks to deflect our march from its course and to induce friction among our citizens. However, the state is standing firmly and steadily. It has proved its ability to frustrate these attempts and obstruct their aims. The Lebanese people's cohesion and their rallying around their state are stronger than all these attempts.

May God have mercy on the innocent victims and may he heal the injured.

What happened is yet another reason for all of us—officials and citizens—to cooperate to prevent the tendentious aggressors from toying with the unity of this homeland and its foundations.

Long live Lebanese unity. Long live Lebanon.

Information Minister Blames Israel

NC2702142494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Statement by Information Minister Michel Samahah, followed by remarks in response to a question by an unidentified reporter, on 27 February; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] This is an al-Ibrahimi-mosque-style attack against Christians. The perpetrator is the same and the objective is identical. The perpetrator in both cases is Israel. There is a clear Israeli hand acting here through agents. The two crimes—the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and the bombing in Sayyidat al-Najat church ... [pauses] The new crime aims to engage the attention of international media and opinion in an event that looks sectarian on the surface. A crime taking place at Sunday mass in a church can take some limelight away from the Israeli-planned atrocity in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in the occupied territories, in which 55 were killed and about 300 wounded.

Those who planned and carried out the church bombing hope to create sectarian strife in Lebanon. Therefore, the best answer to the atrocity is to assert solidarity among the Lebanese. Fortified with the lessons of the civil war, the Lebanese should join forces with the Government to uncover the perpetrators and punish them. The Lebanese know how to deal with such tragedies, which can always be repeated. The enemy is the same one. We know from past experience that they never give up. Therefore, we should build up our immunity by remaining united and cooperating with the Government.

[Correspondent] Do you think that the bombing is aimed at the visit of His Holiness the Pope to Lebanon [scheduled for May]?

[Samahah] It may be directed against the visit ... [pauses] Among other things, it may be directed against the visit by the Holy See to Lebanon. I certainly hope that those who have expressed opposition to the Pope's visit have nothing to do with this morning's incident in Sayyidat al-Najat Church. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Comments

NC2702150594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Feb 94

[News conference by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri with unidentified correspondents on 27 February; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Hariri] The most important thing is that the Lebanese should not be dragged into this plan that is clearly being supported by foreign hands. We are all one people, one hand. Whatever pains one area pains another area. God willing, we will transcend this ordeal and open our eyes so that no one will deceive us.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[Al-Hariri] It is clear [words indistinct] a Christian area in Kasrawan to cause sectarian strife. However, it is clear this will not affect the Lebanese. The Lebanese, Muslims and Christians, are one hand.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[Al-Hariri] The churches and mosques have their sanctity. During the worst days of the Lebanese war, no such thing happened. So it is clear that whoever did this thing wanted to inflict a deep wound. However, the Lebanese with their willpower and their faith in God and their homeland will not be dragged into such plans.

Speaker Urges Vigilance

NC2702145894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1135 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has stated that the purpose of this abominable crime against worshipers in Sayyidat al-Najat Church was to sabotage general stability in Lebanon. He said this crime, which coincided with an Israeli escalation in southern Lebanon, is an attempt to divert world attention from the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre. He noted that Israel is behind all this.

Speaker Birri called on the Lebanese to be vigilant and responsible so that we will all emerge from this test with more faith in Lebanon.

Church Official Comments

NC2702153894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1250 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Statement by Maronite patriarch Butrus Sfayr in Zuq Mikha'il on 27 Feb—recorded]

[Text] A massacre of this kind is indescribable because it is very painful. It targeted not only this church but peace itself not just in Lebanon but in the whole region. Therefore, we vehemently condemn this massacre and implore God to remove hatred and prejudice from people's hearts. The criminals should respect human lives that belong to God and not to them. Those who perpetrated this act have lost a great part of their humanity. We invoke God to instill peace in people's hearts in this homeland and in the region.

Fadlallah Blames Israel

NC2702191394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah called the bombing at Sayyidat al-Najat Church an atrocity and lamented the death of innocents. The bombing, he said, signals a new pattern of attacks on places of worship. He added that the crime is designed to disturb the country's security and political life and unsettle the public's renewed sense of civic peace.

Israeli hands cannot be absolved of this crime, whose purpose was to divert attention from the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque and trigger a new cycle of violence in the country, Fadlallah stated. He called on the authorities to uncover the evil hands that carried out the crime.

Syria's President Condemns Blast

NC2702204694 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi this evening received a telephone call from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, who condemned the crime at the Sayyidat al-Najat Church.

President al-Asad conveyed his condolences to the victims and wished a speedy recovery for the wounded. He said that what afflicted Lebanon afflicted Syria. He stressed that the Syrian security services, in cooperation with the Lebanese services, will make every effort to apprehend the culprits.

Amal Comments

NC2702205394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Statement by the Amal Movement's leadership on 27 February—read by announcer]

[Text] The movement's leadership denounces the appalling massacre committed by Israel and its agents against our people worshipping at Sayyidat al-Najat

Church in Zuq Mikha'il. It believes that this crime is a new link in the chain of Israel's daily acts of aggression against our people in occupied Palestine and south Lebanon. The movement's leadership stresses that the pattern of mass murders is uniquely perfected and practiced by Israel, and what happened a few days ago at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron and today in Sayyidat al-Najat Church are the best proof of this.

Today's abominable crime, which Israel is using along with its other daily aggressive acts against the south to show that Lebanon is unstable and insecure, will only increase the Lebanese people's determination to cling tighter to the state and its institutions and increase their unity and solidarity in the face of any aggression against Lebanon.

While expressing solemn grief over the martyrs and the wounded in today's incident, the movement extends condolences to all Lebanese and emphasizes its solidarity with and participation in the mourning scheduled to be observed tomorrow by the Lebanese state. The movement prays to God Almighty to have mercy on the deceased, grant speedy recovery to the wounded, and continued peace and national unity to Lebanon.

Information Minister Comments

NC2702231594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2211 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Statement by Information Minister Michel Samahah, followed by a question and answer session, with unidentified correspondents in Beirut 27 February—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Samahah] At the invitation of his excellency the prime minister, the Council of Ministers held an extraordinary meeting this evening. His excellency the president attended and chaired the meeting.

The Council of Ministers devoted its extraordinary meeting to the attack against state security, which took the form of an explosion at the Sayyidat al-Najat Church in Zuq Mikha'il this morning. At the beginning of the meeting, his excellency the president briefed the ministers on his contacts with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, who denounced the attack and placed Syria's resources at the disposal of Lebanese authorities to discover the perpetrators. He also briefed the ministers on his contact with his majesty the king of Jordan for the same purpose. His excellency the president also briefed the Council of Ministers on all his contacts from within the country and abroad denouncing the attack.

The Council of Ministers then examined the implications of the crime and its intention to weaken confidence in the security situation and the economic and social stability in Lebanon, fan sectarian fanaticism in the country, and divert the attention of world public opinion from the massacre committed by Israel in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Council of Ministers praised the overwhelming reaction through which the Lebanese expressed comprehensive national unity in the face of this attack that was directed against the country's security and unity.

The Council of Ministers decided to refer the attack against the state security in the Sayyidat al-Najat Church in Zuq Mikha'il to the Judicial Council. Following the statement issued by his excellency the president, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, and the prime minister this morning calling for public mourning tomorrow, the Council of Ministers also decided to call for a general strike tomorrow. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]?

[Samahah] There are measures that are being adopted by the security commands in all the areas at the instructions of the Council of Ministers and the ministers concerned.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, [words indistinct] the crime that took place, have you specified the [words indistinct]?

[Samahah] All that was said by the officials today refers to whoever we think, and we can confirm, is behind this attack, crime, massacre this morning against the worshipers in Sayyidat al-Najat Church.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, [words indistinct] referred to those who opposed the pope's visit to Lebanon. You hoped that they had no hand in the church explosion. Did you mean Minister Walid Junblatt?

[Samahah] Not at all. Minister Walid Junblatt is one of those who has welcomed the visit of his holiness the pope and has cooperated with the Lebanese authorities. He has adopted declared positions with regard to domestic unity and receiving the pope in Lebanon. The ones I meant know who they are. They issued statements on this matter last week.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]?

[Samahah] Perhaps. Let us leave it to the investigation to determine that. We hope it will end soon and that the perpetrators will be discovered soon so that everyone will be reassured and we can know the aim and background of this attack. [passage omitted]

28 Feb Declared Day of Mourning for Victims

NC2702173794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Lebanon will observe a day of mourning tomorrow, Monday, in a show of public grief over the death of innocent victims in the criminal bombing at Sayyidat al-Najat Church.

Security Services Investigating Bombing

NC2802064894 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] A security meeting was held at the Army Intelligence Directorate last night to review the security situation in light of the church bombing and discuss coordination among the various agencies regarding investigations. The meeting was attended by heads of the judiciary and security services of the Army, Internal Security, Public Security, and State Security. A representative of the Syrian forces also attended.

In Juniyah, Nasri Lahhud, the government's delegate to the military court, chaired a security meeting attended by Jabal Lubnan Public Attorney Tarabayh Rahmah, who noted there was a scheme to bomb churches. He said a suspect had been remanded earlier and he will be interrogated.

Buwayz Interviewed on Bombing, Peace Talks, Hebron

NC2802151594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stressed that investigations are continuing to discover the perpetrators of the crime committed at the Sayyidat al-Najat Church in Zuq Mikha'il, noting that this requires great efforts. After meeting U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Mark Hambley, who conveyed condolences for the victims of the crime, Buwayz noted that he discussed the steps being taken by the United States toward Israel to control such extremist actions as the attack in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. Buwayz said:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] Investigations are continuing into the church crime. At the cabinet meeting yesterday, several decisions were made to boost security agencies' interrogations and increase coordination among them to discover the perpetrators of this carnage. No doubt, resolving this issue will require great efforts, particularly because the perpetrators are professional and capable.

[Unidentified reporter] Can you tell us about the content of the message you received from the U.S. ambassador?

[Buwayz] The meeting had two goals: We received condolences from the U.S. ambassador on the martyrs of the Sayyidat al-Najat church carnage. He advised us on steps that the U.S. Government has taken with Israel to control extremism such as the attack in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

[Reporter] After the incidents in the Ibrahimi Mosque and in Juniyah yesterday, do you believe that the fate of the peace talks is now threatened?

[Buwayz] The negotiations encounter extremism from here and there. No doubt, the decision and responsibility for peace make it imperative for all countries and parties concerned to follow clear and firm line in dealing with the (?rejectionists). We believe that it is high time for the Israeli Government to put an end to continued provocations that impede the atmosphere of peace in the region.

[Reporter] Will the church crime affect Pope John Paul's visit to Lebanon?

[Buwayz] I do not think it will affect the pope's visit. The pope usually visits countries and peoples beset by difficulties, not prosperous and stable countries. He usually visits peoples suffering from problems.

[Reporter] The Washington peace talks have been suspended. Do you think that they will stop forever?

[Buwayz] Talks are under way with the U.S. to ensure the continuity of the peace talks. [end recording]

Prime Minister, Official, Parties React to Hebron Event

President Urging UN Action

NC2502203394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Commenting on the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre, President Ilyas al-Hirawi has stated: They talk about human rights and classify the countries that do not respect these rights. Are today's massacre in Hebron and the victims who died while praying to God Almighty on the occasion of blessed Ramadan included in these human rights? How can this be explained? How would it be classified? Is anything more barbaric than this? What is the stand of the civilized world demanding human rights vis-a-vis such a massacre that reminds us of the Hitler era?

President al-Hirawi added: Condemnation is not enough. We are waiting for some action and a clear decision from the United Nations, the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace conference, and the pioneers of freedom led by Europe and especially France.

President al-Hirawi then asked: What measures will be taken to protect the people in the occupied territories?

Buwayz: Attack Aimed at Ruining Negotiations

NC2502131994 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1237 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has declared that the massacre perpetrated in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron today was designed to ruin the negotiations and create a climate of obstruction and chaos that will hinder all the peace efforts. Buwayz said he believes this is neither a new nor a transient Israeli act.

These remarks by Minister Buwayz were quoted by the reporters' doyen Milhim Karam, who, along with a delegation from the Journalists Association, met the foreign minister at noon today.

[Begin Karam recording] His Excellency Minister Faris Buwayz believes that this morning's massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque in the blessed month of Ramadan was designed to ruin the negotiations and create a climate of obstruction and chaos that will hinder all the peace efforts. The foreign minister believes that this Israeli conduct is neither new nor transient, because the Israeli Government is a weak government that colludes with and facilitates the acts of every saboteur, fundamentalist, or extremist movement.

Reports in the past two days of a prospective Cabinet reshuffle are untrue. Minister Buwayz asserts that any earnest discussion of a reshuffle, Cabinet change, or of ministers swapping portfolios is not in the cards now and has not yet been discussed seriously. [end recording]

Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council, speaking during a Friday sermon, called for halting the negotiations or at least freezing them for a time to confront the world with its responsibility. If we do not do this, he remarked, we will be helping to conceal the crime.

Shams-al-Din added: We are no longer concerned with protecting the fragile peace, especially if the Hebron massacre is a harbinger of what will come later.

He called for reinforcing national unity to confront Zionist aggression, to stop attaching too much importance to minor sectarian and denominational issues, and to renounce personal, factional, and partisan ambitions.

The interior minister denounced the incident and demanded international intervention.

Deputy Speaker Comments

NC2502202294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri said that the Hebron Mosque shootings is another chapter in the record of Zionist terrorism and is an incentive to unite and insist on liberating the land. He called for escalating resistance to the Israeli occupation forces. He stressed that Israel does not seek peace in the region and that its attempts to circumvent the Geneva summit are continuing, sometimes by threatening to repeat last summer's aggression and at other times by imposing obstructionist conditions to withdrawal from south Lebanon and implementation of Resolution 425.

For his part, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has called for collective action to end the occupation. He affirmed that a comprehensive and just peace is the means to achieve a genuine peace and noted that any partial agreement in the name of peace will only lead to further conflict and the shedding of innocent people's blood.

The Amal Movement urged international legitimacy to prove its credibility and enforce the implementation of its resolutions, which Israel violates daily.

The Progressive Socialist Party viewed the massacre as a message to the Arabs and Muslims and another disgrace for Zionism, which world public opinion acquitted of charges of racism at the United Nations.

The National Liberal Party denounced the massacre and expressed fear of its negative impact on the peace process.

Leaders Declare Day of Mourning for Hebron Deaths

NC2602122094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] His Excellency President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri have discussed the horrific massacre in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque. They released the following statement:

In expression of overwhelming anger and strong condemnation of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre during the dawn prayers, and in affirmation of solidarity with the patient and steadfast Palestinian people, Lebanon—its president, the Council of Ministers, the Chamber of Deputies, and people—hereby declares national mourning and general closure of businesses throughout Lebanon on Thursday, 3 March, 1994, to mark the one week anniversary of the Hebron massacre.

Sidon Observes General Strike To Protest Hebron

NC2602142494 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Sidon today observed a general and total strike in protest over the Hebron Massacre and to mark the 19th anniversary of the martyrdom of leader Ma'ruf Sa'd [founder of the Nasirite Popular Organization]. There was a large demonstration in which thousands took part, including youth organizations and students. Deputy Musafa Sa'd and representatives of patriotic and Islamic Lebanese and Palestinian parties also took part.

Deputy Sa'd addressed the demonstrators, pledging loyalty to the ideas of Martyr Ma'ruf Sa'd and determination to defend the rights of the working and dispossessed classes against the monopolistic clique.

Sa'd also vowed that resistance will continue until the liberation of the south and Western al-Biqa'. He called on the international community to put an end to the brutal Zionist practices against the sons of Palestine.

Demonstrators Protest Hebron Killings, PLO's 'Arafat

NC2502143194 Paris AFP in English 1334 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] 'Ayn al-Hulwah, Lebanon, Feb 25 (AFP)—Around 2,000 Moslem fundamentalist demonstrators called here Friday for the downfall of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and the elimination of Israel after the Hebron massacre.

The demonstrators emerged from five mosques in the Palestinian refugee camp, shouting "Death to Israel" and pledging to continue the armed struggle against the Jewish state, an AFP correspondent said.

Banners read "Move Over 'Arafat" and "Down, Down 'Arafat."

They carried green flags, a colour which symbolises Islam, and chanted Koranic verses, including: "There is no God but God."

Some of the demonstrators tore up pictures of 'Arafat, whose support has fallen dramatically in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp since the signing of the September 13 PLO-Israel autonomy accord.

Abu Ayyub, an official of the local al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, urged 'Arafat to give up the "treacherous accord" and urged all concerned parties to put an end to the Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Around 200 demonstrators also protested in the Bass camp in the southern port of Tyre following a call by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), correspondent there said.

Palestinian and fundamentalist groups, including factions of 'Arafat's Fatah organisation, vowed to avenge the killings on the West Bank.

In a statement released in 'Ayn al-Hulwah they also called for an end to Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and the "reinforcement of the intifadah in the occupied territories."

They urged the international community "to slap economic sanctions" on Israel and declared three days of mourning in 'Ayn al-Hulwah, home to around 75,000 people.

Schools shut down in 'Ayn al-Hulwah as news of the massacre broke out here and shops were shuttered when the demonstration got underway.

The PLO representative in Lebanon, Shafiq al-Hut, meanwhile called for an urgent meeting of the Palestine National Council, the PLO's parliament in exile which he said should be attended by non- PLO members as well.

Al-Hut also said the peace talks should be called off.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said the massacre "is the result of the encouragements given by the Israeli Government to extremists opposed to the peace process."

"We can say that the Israeli Government is the accomplice of radical and extremist movements in Israel," Buwayz said.

Palestinian dissident leader Munir Maqdah blamed 'Arafat's policies for the massacre and said that the PLO leader "has no other choice to shoot himself in the head and commit suicide."

"Our response against the Israeli Army and the settlers will be strong," Maqdah said, adding that Palestinians opposed to the peace talks will use all the arms at their disposal in coordination with Hamas and the radical Islamic Jihad.

At least 58 Palestinians were killed and dozens more were wounded when one or more settlers shot worshippers at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, and troops subsequently clashed with demonstrators.

Commentary Blames Israel, U.S. for Hebron Incident

NC2502162794 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1248 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Unattributed political commentary: "A Peace Based on Blood"]

[Text] This week saw a series of dramatic developments in the Palestinian arena. Israel has covered many phases in programing and organizing the Palestinian-Palestinian dispute and shifting it onto the stage of a military clash. It imported large quantities of arms to the Gaza Strip while discussing an imminent military withdrawal from the Strip after it became certain of the essence and security and political details of its successive accords with the PLO in Oslo, Cairo, Washington, Taba, Paris, Davos, and other capitals.

Rabin acknowledged this plan with disparagement and derision when he announced that the new situation creates a sense of mistrust, asking what will happen among the various Palestinian factions that might engage in a power struggle. He said: Wherever there is a thriving market, regrettably, there are Israelis who collaborate on smuggling arms from Israel to be sold to the Palestinians. He added: Nearly every day, a Palestinian is killed at the hands of his fellow Palestinians.

Doesn't this reveal Israel's persistent hostile intentions toward the Palestinians and its arming itself with the Gaza-Jericho Accord and its appendixes to express these intentions? We said before that the accord will generate an inter-Palestinian dispute stretching to the extent of an internal war that would destroy the intifadah and achieve Israel's old dream and goal, giving Israel a pretext for its strategy. In such an event, Israel will present itself as an advocate of peace and absolve itself of every condemnation to tell the world later, according to Rabin's statement, that it was not strict with the Palestinians and did not deal with them harshly, as they themselves deal with each other. At the same time, Israel will have paved the way for eliminating the Palestinian cause in terms of material and human resources by Palestinian hands after it has provided a political atmosphere for such a move through the Gaza- Jericho

Accord. It will do it without relinquishing its right to participate in eliminating the cause if need be, according to the recently signed appendixes.

In this context, the Israeli Administration sowed new sedition. It withdrew the Jewish soldiers from the Gaza area and delegated the task of the blockade to Arab soldiers serving in the Israeli army to deepen political, denominational, and sectarian division and weaken the Palestinian fold from within so that it will have time to track down the symbols of the intifadah in the Hamas Movement, Fatah ranks, or other Palestinian organizations.

This does not seem enough according to the Israeli plan. The Hebron residents woke up today to a horrible massacre perpetrated by Israeli settlers inside a mosque in which scores of people were martyred or wounded. Who will ask Israel to arrest and punish these criminals? Isn't this act aimed against the peace process in the view of the United States and Israel? Are the resistance in south Lebanon and the intifadah in Palestine in defense of rights a hindrance to the region's peace process? Is the Hebron massacre today and are previous massacres positive signs and elements of strength and momentum for this peace process?

Why haven't we heard an American or international condemnation of this carnage? Why aren't sanctions imposed against Israel? Where do the dangers to Israel lie when it enters the peace process? Where is its adventure, as the Americans, who adopt the Israeli stance, say?

Is this carnage and are Israel's measures inside the occupied territories the preconditions that they mention for guaranteeing Israel's security and compensating her for engaging in the peace process?

What if the Arab Palestinians or non-Palestinians rose up and responded to Israel's acts? What would the American, Israeli, European, and international reaction be? What kind of peace is this that is based on annihilating a nation? What is this just and comprehensive peace when Israel's act of murder is collective and covers Palestinians everywhere, the Lebanese, and others? Where is the peace of nations against Israel's practices and massacres?

The United States has a major responsibility for what is happening. The argument that the United States is not involved because the issue is now between the two sides after it paved the way for them cannot be ignored or accepted. The Arab countries too are responsible and able to pressure the United States and Israel if they want to and sense their responsibility to halt their rush, their race, toward Israel and their haste to end the boycott of and be open to Israel. But the greatest responsibility is Palestinian, whether on the level of the PLO or other factions and forces. It is a responsibility to escalate the struggle against Israel, especially within Israel, to coordinate, cooperate, and integrate with Syria, and to stop this dialogue taking place at the expense of Palestinian blood in the blessed month of Ramadan and all year round to deter Israel and end the state of collapse and successive political, material, and human losses incurred by the Gaza-Jericho Accord.

Dailies Publish Reaction to Hebron Killings

NC2802110494

[Editorial Report] The Lebanese newspapers on 26 February give front page prominence to the Hebron massacre, publishing various reports and pictures and offering angry editorial comment.

Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic publishes on page 1 an approximately 800-word editorial signed by Rafiq Khuri, the newspaper's chief editor, under the headline "Some Anger and Some Thinking." Contending first that "there is nothing worse than the Hebron massacre except the policies leading to it," Khuri says reaction to the killings "needs more than Rabin's 'sense of shame,' 'Arafat's 'anger,' the Security Council's 'elegies,' and the world's 'condemnation.'" He maintains: "The forces that planned and perpetrated the crime were carrying out an organized political act, not an act of revenge or 'gratuitous killing' as was said." Khuri says he believes: "What matters now is not what Rabin and 'Arafat say, but what they do. The world is awaiting not hot public reaction, but cool action behind the scenes."

The writer notes that opponents of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and the peace process are calling for halting the negotiations and adopting armed struggle to liberate the occupied territories, while the United States, Europe, and many other concerned parties believe that the best reaction to the massacre is to speed up the peace process. Commenting on this, Khuri says: "The call for armed struggle needs different circumstances and different balances of power" and the call for accelerating the peace process "needs different American and Israeli policies." He explains: "When Israel wants to take settlements, peace, security, and share water and resources without giving up the land, then this is not a solution. And when Washington plays the role of a spectator at negotiations between a strong side and a weak side, then this is not a just and comprehensive settlement." Khuri concludes: "The problem has two sides: While war has no horizon, the road to peace is long, very difficult, and planted with massacres and dangerous policies. What is required is an aggressive U.S. position and some Arab anger and thinking."

In an approximately 500-word front page editorial in the Beirut paper AL-NAHAR in Arabic entitled "The Big Question," Chief Editor Ghassan Tuwayni describes the Hebron killings as "the second Dayr Yasin" [a Palestinian village that witnessed killings in 1947]. The paper poses its "big question:" "Does the Israeli mentality accept peace with others, Muslims or non Muslims, Arabs or non Arabs, or Palestinians or non Palestinians?"

Referring to talk of peace and normal relations with Israel, the paper asks: "What kind of normalization do they want if the Israeli Government, no matter how strong, remains unable—assuming it wants to do something—to confront the madness of instinctive killing?'" Continuing to cast doubt on the possibility of peace with Israel, the paper asks whether the massacre means there is only room for terrorism and fundamentalism in Israel and whether the only dialogue with Israel is that of extremism, hatred, killing, and terrorism.

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic publishes on page 1 an approximately 1,000-word article by chief editor Talal Salman headlined "Palestine Has No Reference Other Than Its Blood." Salman laments that Palestine and its people are left alone to face the "Israeli ghoul." He notes that the world dealt with the massacre as "a security incident" in Israel concerning only the Israeli Government. Salman criticizes the "impotent" Palestinian leadership and says peace with Israel is only an illusion: "Israel is Israel, Palestine is Palestine, and the divide between them is the edge of the sword. The spilled blood washes away the barriers and drowns the illusions of an impossible settlement between the executioner and the victim." Salman maintains that the Israeli Government, army, settlers, and people are one and the same thing. He concludes: "Israel is Israel. It did not change. It won't change unless we grow strong and force it to change."

Demonstrators Burn 'Arafat Effigy at Protest March

NC2802160494 Paris AFP in English 1528 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] Beirut, Feb 28 (AFP)—Around 3,000 angry pro-Iranian and pro-Syrian demonstrators burned an effigy of PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat in a protest march here to mourn Palestinian Moslems gunned down in Hebron.

Hundreds of Palestinian women marched alongside the demonstrators carrying black flags in mourning for the 52 Palestinian Moslems who were killed in a West Bank mosque on Friday by an Israeli settler.

They shouted "Death to 'Arafat" and "Death to Zionists" before burning an effigy of the PLO leader at the Martyrs Cemetery, where many Palestinians killed in confrontations with Israelis are buried alongside Lebanese.

Supporters of Hezbollah and radical Palestinian organisations based in Damascus participated in the demonstration which took off from outside a mosque in Beirut's mostly Shiite Moslem southern suburbs.

Many denounced the September 13 peace deal between the PLO and Israel.

Spokesman: End Occupation Within Talks Framework

JN2502192794 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Dec 94

[Statement by unidentified "official spokesman"—read by announcer]

[Text] The Syrian public opinion was shocked to hear the news of the horrible massacre which was committed by armed Israeli elements against Palestinian worshipers inside Hebron's holy Ibrahimi Mosque at dawn today in which dozens were martyred and hundreds injured.

This outrageous act, which reminds the Arabs and Muslims of the Dayr Yasin Massacre in 1948, emphasizes to the whole world the extreme seriousness of the continuing Israeli occupation of the territories and settling in it in contravention of all laws and statutes and as a flagrant challenge to the UN resolutions and Charter.

It has become clear to the entire international community that Israel's intransigent stands, expansionist aims, and the policies of evasion and procrastination which it has been following in the peace talks for more than two years are the primary cause of the acts of violence in the occupied Arab territories. Israel is responsible, directly or indirectly, for extremism in the region.

Syria, which is aware that the whole world deplores this savage massacre, is well aware that words of denunciation and condemnation are not enough to end the circles of violence and terror, and that an end to the Israeli occupation without further procrastination and stalling within the framework of the current peace talks [fi itari muhadathat al-salam al-jariyah] and allowing the Palestinian people to acquire their right of self-determination will ensure ending extremism and acts of violence and realizing just and comprehensive peace in the region.

People's Assembly Denounces 'Ugly Massacre' in Hebron

JN2602173194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpt] The People's Assembly met today in a session chaired by Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah. At the start of the session, Assembly members rose to observe one minute of silence in mourning for the martyrs who fell at the holy Ibrahimi mosque, victims of armed Israeli elements.

Afterwards, Qaddurah and several members spoke. They denounced this ugly massacre and stressed that the entire world will realize Israel is a leader of terrorism that is protecting extremism, organizing all kinds of crimes, obstructing the peace process, and placing obstacles in order to foil the peace talks and turn talk about peace and stability in the region into illusions. [passage omitted]

Al-Asad Receives King Husayn Phone Call on Hebron

JN2702071394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus—His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad last night received a telephone call from His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The two leaders discussed the barbaric attack against Palestinian worshipers while they were performing dawn prayers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. They also discussed the extent of Israel's seriousness with regard to the peace process.

Golan Demonstrations Denounce Hebron Attack

JN2702145794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Villages and towns in the occupied Syrian Golan yesterday witnessed marches and demonstrations in solidarity with Palestinian brothers in the occupied Arab territories and in denunciation of the Hebron massacre.

Syrian citizens raised banners and slogans denouncing the Israeli occupation authorities and the heinous massacre and demanding international protection from the provocation and arrogance of the settlers for Arab citizens.

Palestinian Camps on Strike Over Hebron Killings

JN2702130994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpt] A general strike was observed in all Palestinian camps in Syria to protest the bestial massacre perpetrated by Zionist settlers against our people in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. Shops were closed in these camps and black flags were raised to mourn the righteous Palestinian martyrs.

The factions affiliated with the Alliance of the Palestinian Forces in Syria decided to receive condolences for three days, as of today, Saturday, in the al-Yarmuk branch of the Palestinian Youths.

Palestinian popular organizations and masses today staged sit-ins at the offices of the International Red Cross, the United Nations, the Arab League, and the PLO in Damascus. They handed protest memorandums to the representatives of these organizations on this terrible massacre. The memorandums urged the international organizations and community to move swiftly to stop the massacres against the Palestinian people, to carry out their duties and safeguard the lives of innocent people, and to implement the international resolutions which call for protecting people under occupation. The Palestinian organizations' memorandums stressed that the new massacre will not prevent the Palestinian people from continuing their just struggle until they achieve all their objectives. [passage omitted]

Unions Condemn Hebron Attack, 'Double Standards'

JN2702162994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The popular organizations and trade unions in Syria have condemned the Israeli massacre perpetrated at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque. They emphasized this massacre was the result of an organized, premeditated, and planned act. This is proven by the mass killings and acts of violence which continued after this terrible massacre at the hands of the Israeli occupation troops in several areas of the occupied territories.

In a statement issued today, the popular organizations and trade unions said this abominable crime is not new to the aggressive nature of the Israeli settlers and soldiers. This crime was intended to terrorize Arab residents as a prelude to evacuating and annexing Arab land as part of the Israeli policy of expansion and hegemony.

The statement noted Israel's racist rancor and terrorist record, which is replete with mass massacres, including the massacres of Dayr Yasin, Qibyah, Kafr Qasim, Bahr al-Baqar, Da'il, and southern Lebanon. The statement added that the Hebron massacre confirms the dangers posed by continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories and the presence of settlements in them. Both the occupation and settlements violate all international laws, norms, and resolutions.

The statement emphasized that this heinous massacre shows that Israel's intransigence and procrastination in the peace talks instigate acts of violence. This makes Israel responsible for extremism and terrorism in the region.

The statement reiterated that the Syrian people, organizations, and trade unions support the Palestinian Arab people and our kinsfolk in the Golan and southern Lebanon in their struggle to liberate every inch of Arab territory and to regain the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

The statement added that the popular organizations and trade unions—which were established under the sponsorship and care of leader struggler Hafiz al-Asad and which are experienced in adherence to rights as their policy and in sticking to consistent positions as their principle—stress that the path of capitulation, sellout of rights, and chasing the mirage of partial and deceptive solutions cannot produce peace.

The statement urged the international community, the Security Council, and the United Nations to end the policy of double standards and assume their humanitarian responsibility to confront the logic of Israeli hegemony. It urged these bodies to pressure Israel into complying with international legitimacy, which specifies the principles of a just and comprehensive peace and guarantees security in the region.

Iran

President, Groups, Dailies Respond to Hebron Attack

President Blames U.S., Israel

LD2702121294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has said the painful tragedy and massacre of fasting Muslims in the town of Hebron by the criminal Zionists is a sad example of a lack of healthy conscience and weakness of human ethics. He said the beastly act of spraying bullets on a fasting people prostrating in the safety of the house of God is a very ugly and shameful picture further revealing the savage and shameful nature of the Zionists. If there was a sufficiently enlightened and healthy conscience in the world the incident could have shaken the world into ending its policy of support for the Zionist regime.

Addressing a gathering of educational officers today Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani criticized the stance of the UN Security Council and the sad silence of international organizations, and he blamed America and its allies for their support for Israel. He said: If the world had correct education and moral purification such incidents would not have happened, or even if they had they would have caused a wave of protest, anger, and disgust across the effective and decisionmaking organizations of the world.

Cabinet Declares Day of Mourning

LD2502163994 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Dear viewers; please pay attention to a report which has just come in: After the brutal massacre by the Zionists in the Ibrahim Mosque, in a statement issued by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a general day of mourning has been declared for 26 February, throughout the country. The text of the statement is as follows.

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The cabinet of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly condemns the brutal atrocity by the Zionists in the shrine of His Holiness Ebrahim-e Khalil, peace be upon him, which ended in the martyrdom and wounding of hundreds of fasting Palestinian Muslims. It considers the slaughter to be the foreseeable result of the unquestioning support given by the world arrogance and American imperialism to the policies of an illegal and illegitimate regime, which is an agent of tension and crisis in the region and the instigator of the suppression and massacre of the Muslims and free minded individuals who wish to live in their own homeland.

The cabinet of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, categorically supports the justice seeking struggles of the Palestinian nation, and in sympathy with those people and the families of the martyrs and injured in that horrific disaster declare a general day of mourning throughout the country on Saturday 7 Esfand [26th February].

[Signed] The cabinet of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Khamene'i Calls Attack 'Model' Crime

LD2502180694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Following the savage attack of the Zionists against the ranks of fasting Muslim Palestinians in the shrine of his holiness Abraham in the town of Hebron, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the guardian of Muslims, has issued a statement. The text of the eminent leader's statement is as follows:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The villainous attack by the Zionists against worshippers in the occupied town of Hebron, which left dozens dead and hundreds injured, is one of those model crimes which can only be brought about by the cruel and bigoted hands of the Zionists and is in keeping with the villainy and wretchedness of the usurpers of Palestine.

This tragic blow is a reminder of the Zionists' other mass killings throughout the years of occupation, with this difference, that, today, this enormous crime took place before the eyes of the entire world. Will the consciences which have remained indifferent to what has been happening to Palestinians in their own homes be awakened by this tragedy? Will the false seekers of peace with the usurper enemy realise their mistake now? Will organizations and governments that claim to defend human rights, which have disregarded the gravest violation of a nation's rights over a period of years, finally end their shameless silence now and confess to their past sins? Will the American Government accept that it is an accomplice to those who have shed the blood of innocent Palestinians, because it has consistently given its unconditional support to the Zionist government? Or will everyone ignore this tragic incident once again, without accepting its implications and learning any lessons just as they have failed to pay any attention to the other great tragedy of the times in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

Nevertheless, the Palestinian nation will undoubtedly learn the appropriate lesson from this incident. Today, once again, the bitter truth has been driven home to that oppressed nation that it must fight in its own home in order to be able to live there. It has been driven home to them that the Zionists—despite the elegant statements of some of their leaders—continue to be the same racist and bigoted savages they have been for the past 50 years. And they only need the slightest opportunity or excuse to inflict the most villainous blows on the Palestinians who are the true owners of the land.

Even the most slow-to-believe Palestinians must now be convinced that the arrogant regimes that make so many claims about the need for the security of the Zionists do not care in the slightest about the security of Muslim Palestinians; otherwise, the Israeli Army would not dare to massacre sacred worshippers in this way.

It is through arming and attacking the interests of the usurping regime that the Palestinians can obtain the right of life and livelihood in their own home. Such is the lesson of the Friday morning incident at Hebron. Muslim governments and nations also have a great responsibility. The least that Muslim nations can demand is the handing over of the murderers and their collaborators in the Zionist army to Muslim Palestinians for the execution of religious retribution and the dismissal of that army's commanders. Of course, the final and only solution is to dispossess the usurping Zionists and to transfer Palestine to Palestinians of all religions and nationalities.

While expressing condolences to the innocent people of Palestine, in particular the relatives of the martyrs of the incident, I beseech God Almighty for forgiveness for the deceased, the recovery of the wounded who were fasting, the reform of the Muslim conditions, and a just solution to the Palestinian issue, and call on all to pursue this matter with all their might.

[Signed] Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i

[Dated] 25 February 1994

Khamene'i Message Disseminated'

NC2702081794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The imam of the al-Aqsa Mosque has expressed his appreciation for the message by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the Guardian of the Muslims' cause, in condemnation of the Zionists' crime at the shrine of Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him.

According to IRNA in Beirut, Shaykh Hamid al-Bitawi stressed yesterday that the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the tyrannized Palestinian nation and eschews international political games. Reports received indicate the message issued by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i condemning the atrocity of the Zionists was translated in Arabic and disseminated in occupied Palestine.

Velayati Calls for 'Urgent' ICO Meeting

LD2602163694 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] After the savage massacre of worshippers at the shrine of his holiness Abraham, our country's Foreign Ministry, while initiating extensive political moves at the international level to confront that horrific act, in a message to the Secretary General of the ICO, has called for an urgent meeting of the foreign ministers of the member states of that organization.

The foreign minister, Mr. Velayati, in an interview with our correspondent, while declaring Iran's readiness to give any assistance to the innocent people of Palestine and for serious action against the Zionists, said: Iran's delegation at the United Nations has called on the Security Council to take measures to end the Zionist atrocity in occupied Palestine.

Mr. Velayati added: Despite the Zionists' act, Palestinian Muslims will participate in the arenas of confrontation against the occupiers and that action [massacre] is an answer for those naive people who have pinned their hopes on a peace resulting from the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

Our country's foreign minister also held a telephone conversation with his Pakistani counterpart and conferred with him on the need to convene an ICO meeting.

Majles Speaker: Crime 'Preplanned'

LD2702113194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Speaking in the Majles open session this morning Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri strongly condemned the Zionists' horrific killing of scores of fasting Palestinians in the town of Hebron and said this was a preplanned act in cooperation with America aimed at suppressing the struggles of the Palestinian people.

He said: Muslims and officials in Islamic countries should not not be tricked by the Zionists' deceitful rationalizations. It would be foolish for anyone in the world to think that a few extremist or mentally ill Jews could commit such a crime without a hand from the Israeli and American military.

Explaining the reasons for the crime, the head of the legislature said: Presently due to the blessing of the Islamic revolution the Zionists are facing great waves of popular struggles and Israel with America who are well aware of the consequences of the deep rooted resistance by the children of the intifadah, Hamas, and other revolutionary children of Palestine, are committing such horrendous crimes.

He also expressed regret over and criticized the silence of international organizations and associations regarding the crime. He said in this respect: What is being presented today as the Middle East peace plan has no other aim than the expansion of the hegemony, crimes, and ominous aims of the Zionist regime.

Stating that this crime would not have happened if 'Arafat and his cronies had not accepted the Gaza-Jericho agreement, the Majles speaker referred to the principled Iranian policy on the Zionist regime and said: Muslim nations and governments should accept the reality that the enemy will come forward a step for every step that they take back.

Finally Nateq-Nuri hoped that the children of Palestine will continue their struggles with greater morale and uproot the usurping regime occupying Jerusalem.

Vice Speaker Comments

LD2702152394 Tehran IRNA in English 1406 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 27, IRNA—Majlis Vice Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rohani told the Kazakh ambassador to Tehran here Sunday that there should be an international will to defend the Palestinian nation.

Rohani termed the killing and wounding of hundreds of Palestinians at the shrine of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in al-Khalil [Hebron] Friday as an "unprecedented crime".

"The crime indicates that the U.N. cannot fulfil its duties this way and that the time has come to amend the United Nations Charter," the vice speaker said.

In case such amendments are made to the U.N. Charter, not only Third World countries can play their role in the world organization but the organization would be free from big powers' monopoly, he said.

"Otherwise," Rohani warned, "world nations can no longer trust this organization and they will have no other alternative but to rise up."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rohani expressed hope that relations between the two countries would expand in various fields particularly in economic, trade, scientific, research, transport, oil, tourism and agricultural areas.

The Kazakh ambassador, too, called for promotion of bilateral relations in cultural, social, political and economic areas.

HAMAS Head: Act 'Predetermined'

LD2702164194 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] 'Abu-Hamdan, the head of the office of the Palestine Islamic Resistance Movement, HAMAS, in Tehran, stressed that the blood bath by the Zionists at the Ibrahimi sanctuary was a predetermined plan by the Zionists with full cooperation of the Army.

'Abu-Hamdan said: With the full support of the Army, and using automatic weapons, six Zionist criminals attacked the fasting worshipers in prostration from six vantage points, martyring and wounding more than 400 of them. But to make the world public opinion believe that this was an individual event and to bury the details for ever, the Zionist military then killed one of the elements who was involved in the attack on the Muslims, and who was the main contact with the Israeli Army in the execution of this ominous plan. But how could an individual person commit such a crime on his own and kill and injure hundreds of people?

'Abu-Hamdan stressed that despite efforts by the 'Arafat gang to use the killing to speed up the PLO-Israel deal, HAMAS and other militant organizations opposed to concession plans, will avenge the martyrs of the Hebron bloody Friday by increasing their martyrdom seeking operation.

The head of the HAMAS office in Tehran, while criticizing the weak stance of Arab countries regarding the massacre, said that unfortunately, some of them have moved in line with the Zionists wishes.

Yazdi, Iranian Jewish Community Reacts

LD2602114594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Following yesterday's Zionist crimes in the occupied Palestine, a number of the Islamic Republic of Iran's organizations, foundations, and personalities have issued separate statements expressing sympathy with the families of the victims of the tragic massacre of Muslims at the shrine of Abraham. They also offered their condolences to His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the guardian of the cause of the Muslims, and to all world Muslims, particularly Palestine Muslims, and condemned the perpetrators of that discriminate crime.

The statement issued by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, the head of the judicial power, condemns that horrific crime and offers condolences to his eminence the leader, world Muslims, and the families of victims of the Hebron incident and stresses: The black Friday of Palestine is among crimes that should definitely be taken to the International Penal Court [as heard—Dadgah-e Keifari-ye Beinolmelali] in order to bring the Israeli perpetrators, commanders, and usurpers to court and punish them for their offenses. [passage omitted]

Also, the representative of the Iranian Jewish community at the Islamic Consultative Majles condemned the criminal tragedy of the massacre of the fasting worshipers in the city of Hebron. The statement issued in that respect stresses: The Iranian Jewish community expresses disgust at crimes committed at the shrines of His Holiness Abraham, His Holiness Isaac, and His Holiness Jacob which are among the holiest of shrines and common places of worship for Muslims and Jews. [passage omitted]

Muslims Urged To Show 'Correct' Reaction

NC2502194694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Political report: "The Ugly Crime Committed by the Zionists in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron"]

[Text] The barbaric Zionist crime of the ugly massacre of fasting Muslims in Hebron martyred more than 60 persons and injured more than 300 others. The crime came at a time when Muslims were preparing to celebrate International Jerusalem Day.

The Zionist entity officials—who have failed to achieve their satanic objectives despite all their ruses, capitulationist solutions, and acts of violence—are again trying their luck through fascist means, as they did in Dayr Yasin and Kafr Qasim. By committing massacres and spreading terror, they want to deter the oppressed Palestinian Muslims from continuing their just and legitimate resistance.

The world is once again face to face with a barbaric and ugly crime that has no justification whatsoever. The Zionist entity and the White House leaders are in charge of these practices from behind the curtain.

The Hebron massacre has put an end to the dreams of the bargain seekers and those who indulged the criminal leaders in Tel Aviv and called on the Palestinian people to make peace and bargain with them. Does not bargaining with such an entity lead only to the destruction of the Palestinian Muslim people? Are not those ignoring these crimes and calling on the Tel Aviv leaders to be friends partners in the crime? What crime has the innocent Muslim inhabitants of Hebron committed to be massacred?

World public opinion and Muslims everywhere are angry with this ugly Zionist crime and are urged to show their correct and conscious reaction in order to prevent the Zionists from persisting with actions that aim to annihilate Muslims and Islam.

If Muslims are lax and pay scant attention to this crime, the Zionists and their allies in Washington will certainly take the next steps. The main objective of the arrogant forces and the Zionists is the destruction of the Islamic resistance. The most prominent examples of this are seen today in the occupied territories and Bosnia. We are confident that Muslims will not allow such a satanic plot to pass.

Islamic Jihad Envoy Comments

LD2602141494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1058 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Unattributed political commentary]

[Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Yesterday's dastardly attack by the Zionist forces on the tomb of Abraham in the town of Hebron in occupied Palestine, leading to the death or injury of around 400 fasting worshipers, has grieved the world of Islam, awakened humanity's conscience, and marginalized the world's other news and developments.

We devote today's political commentary to analyzing the various dimensions of that shocking and heart wrenching incident. In our interviews with a number of specialists from the News Research and Analysis Group, as well as Palestine's Islamic Jihad representative in Tehran, we have reviewed yesterday's heart rending incident.

To start with, we hear the details of the incident from Brother Abu-Jihad, the representative of Palestine's Islamic Jihad Movement in Tehran.

[Begin Abu-Jihad recording, in Arabic, with superimposed Persian translation] The incident was one of the most heart wrenching events in the entire history of Palestine and indeed the history of mankind. In this heart wrenching atrocity, which the Zionists committed with the cooperation and participation of the Army of occupation, hundreds of worshipers were attacked in the Abraham al-Khalil mosque, as they were staging the dawn prayers. The large number of victims indicates that several people were involved in the crime. While the Zionist regime has blamed the crime on a mentally deranged medical doctor, remarks made by the chairman of council of Zionist settlements in defense of that criminal removed any doubt that may have existed about the direct involvement of the Zionist regime in yesterday's operations. Although the tomb of Abraham is constantly controlled and guarded by 40 military personnel, only three soldiers were present at the scene on the day of the incident.

We are sorry that at a time when the blood of the Muslim people of Palestine is being shed, some people claim that the Zionist regime is pursuing peace. [end recording]

[Announcer] In order to exonerate itself from the responsibility for this atrocity, the Zionist regime has claimed that a mentally deranged person, or a few fanatical Zionists, had perpetrated the atrocity.

In reference to this claim, Abu-Jihad says: We believe that the Zionist regime is fully responsible for the crime. By licensing the possession of arms and the reopening of military barracks to train the Jews, the Zionist regime must shoulder the blame for the hostile acts committed by its citizens. Furthermore, the violent behavior of the Zionist regime toward demonstrators, who had come out to condemn the incident, was yet more proof of the Zionist regime's collusion with the criminals.

In its first reaction to the tragedy, the American Government announced that it hoped the incident would not effect the process of compromise and negotiations between Israel and the PLO. Ne'matzadeh, a specialist in the Middle East section of the news research and analysis group, says:

[Begin Ne'matzadeh recording] In order to throw light on Israel's objectives, one must analyze the political circumstances at the time of the incident. Israel has so far gained whatever it has been seeking to gain from the Gaza-Jericho Accord, and has officially achieved whatever it demanded from 'Arafat. It has gained political legitimacy, international acceptance, transformation of its warmongering and domineering image, influence over the Arab world, formal domination over the occupied land of Palestine, control over borders, roads, passes and Zionist settlements, and finally domestic and international security. Israel, in other words, has been able to make 'Arafat concede to all its demands.

It seems therefore, that the Zionist regime considered the present juncture as an opportune time to show its real image to the Palestinians in general, and the rejectionist camp in particular. This violent image is in reality the true and authentic face of the Zionist society; an image that in effect serves to consolidate the foundations of the Zionist regime by placing it in a position of strength vis-a-vis its opponents.

Moreover, Israel has specifically targeted the Islamists in yesterday's attacks. This carries a message of serious threat; a message that is backed by the West. [end recording] [passage omitted]

'Cross Section' of Reactions Noted

LD2602142294 Tehran IRNA in English 1312 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 26, IRNA—There is a feeling of hurt and anguish in Muslim circles at the news of the slaughter of innocent Muslims by Israelis in a mosque in Hebron, Palestine.

IRNA talked to a cross section of Muslim intelligentsia from different walks of life today to elicit their views. The reaction everywhere was one of shock and disblief. People were also highly critical of the agreement reached between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader and the Israeli Government late October.

Najma Heptullah, deputy chairman of the upper house of the Indian parliament called the incident tragic. She suggested that both the PLO and the Israeli Government must be cautious for there are people on both sides who are against a lasting peace in the occupied lands.

Heptullah said while such a mishap was expected, it was up to the two sides to diffuse the tension and carry on with the action for peace.

Syed Shahabuddin, member of parliament and a vocal advocate of Muslim issues was anguished to hear of the incident. He can now see the agreement between PLO and the Israeli Government resting on very shaky foundation.

Unless Israel clearly agrees to vacate all occupied territories, no permanent solution can be found, Shahabuddin said adding that this was the main stumbling block to the possibility of a peace. He wanted all settlers to be disarmed so that such mishaps would not be repeated.

Students' islamic Movement (SIM) holds that the issue of Palestine and that of 'Bait-ol-Muqaddas' is that of all Muslims all over the world.

Anwar Ali, secretary general of the organisation feels that the agreement between the two sides is baseless. It is an attempt to thwart the Palestine movement.

Ali added that the entire Muslim world was alarmed at the way in which the Israeli police and army had turned a blind eye to the murder in cold blood of scores of worshipers.

Mulana Mukarram Ahmad, chief imam of the Fatehpuri mosque in New Delhi, feels it is certain big powers who are creating all the trouble. Innocent Muslims are their choice targets every where. He expressed shock and said that all parties must work for peace.

The people of Palestine have gone through very bad times. That phase must come to an end, he said. On whether the incidence will derail the peace process, he said while the possibility was always there, it can be tided over in the interest of peace if the Israelis are sincere.

Syed Hamid, former vice chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University felt the act was a most atrocious one likely to queer the pitch of the negotiations going on between PLO and Israel. He felt the ball was in the Israeli court now. They must provide the necessary security to the Palestinians since they were in command.

S. Burney, former governor of the state of Haryana and a retired civil servant called the incident most painful. He said all violence must be avoided, for violence begets violence.

The slaughter, he said, will have a lot of serious repercussions. He only hoped that peace be restored.

Dailies: Act To Entail 'Grave Consequences'

LD2702111094 Tehran IRNA in English 0817 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 27, IRNA—Iranian morning dailies Sunday condemned the Friday massacre of Muslim Palestinians by the Zionists at Ibrahim mosque in al-Khalil [Hebron] and said it would entail grave consequences.

The English daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL said that the Palestinians were sure to make the Zionists pay heavily for their crimes.

The fact that "such a despicable act should have occurred in the holy month of Ramadhan and that too in a sacred place and at a time when Muslims were in prayer speaks of volumes of the peace proclamations that Zionist Premier Yitzhaq Rabin has been making since he signed the fraudulent autonomy agreement with PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat on September 13 in Washington."

Refuting Tel Aviv claims to distance from the massacre by blaming the incident on a lone deranged gunman, the article said such a destructive crime could not have been carried out single handed and it's certain that the Zionist regime was involved in the premeditated murderous attack.

"Sponsoring state terrorism is not a new game for the Zionist regime," said the daily adding, "it is a part of state policy, backed by its Western allies, ever since Israel was created 45 years ago."

The editorial criticized Western governments for turning a blind eye and remaining silent on the Zionist atrocities against Palestinian Muslims.

Referring to Washington's approach, it said while it quickly condemns "acts of terrorism" or calls for a halt to violence by the Palestinians it has never asked the Zionist regime to disarm the Jewish settlers or give up their provocative acts even after initiating the peace process.

It reminded that the Jewish settlers in Hebron were armed with the latest military equipment and that the Jewish extremists wanted to turn the region into a Jewish town and therefore had indulged in provocative acts to force out the Palestinian residents.

Turning to the "sincere condolences" expressed by Rabin on this occasion, the paper said, "Rabin has mastered the art of speaking peace through one end and firing bullets through the other."

On claims by peace brokers that Israel and the PLO are more than half-way to launching Palestinian self-rule, it said, "in reality the Zionists are more than half-way to wiping out the Arab population in the land of the Palestinians."

Another English daily TEHRAN TIMES criticized the indifference shown by the West to the Palestinian plight and said that the world Muslims should take the initiative and begin implementing independent measures to resolve this historical injustice.

"The world Muslims, particularly the Palestinians, can use their own potentials and capabilities derived from Islam and its traditions to reject those leaders who still believe in making peace with the butchers of Tel Aviv, and remove the Israeli cancer from the body of Islamic Middle East."

It said that the illegal Jewish settlements populated by recent Russian and East European immigrants are ripe for physical violence because of social, religious and cultural incompatibility of the Zionists with the indigenous Palestinian population.

Turning to the Zionists' refusal to abide by U.N. resolutions, it said that the Jews have believed that they can not only steal Palestine but also massacre Palestinian Muslims.

"The selective and totally biased way in which the U.N. implements its own resolutions regarding Palestine is weighing heavily on the world's conscience, while the United States, as Israel's military supplier and financial supporter, bears the major share of guilt for Palestine's miseries as well as for this latest Zionist savagery."

The daily refuted the U.S. attempts to introduce itself as an honest broker in the Arab-Israel conflict that has humanitarian motives free from political and financial considerations.

"But the recent history of U.S. and Western European mediation in this conflict has proven that the West only acts when it is assured that the consequences of its actions are not against Israel or Western interests.

Commenting on the same subject, the Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said that all should enter the scene to take revenge for the massacre of innocent Palestinian Muslims.

The incident, the daily noted, unveiled the true nature of the Zionists at the international scene and to the world nations.

This showed that Palestinians are not secure even in their mosques and at the time of prayer. However, said the article, this is while the traitor 'Arafat and his compromising faction are even ready to massacre Palestinians to guarantee further safety for the Zionists.

The occupied Palestine is passing through sensitive and determining moments, stressed the article, adding that the crime, aimed at cementing 'Arafat-Israel compromise, reveals the vicious alliance of Zionism and its supporters.

"However, there is evidence showing that the enemy has repeated the same big blunder in this connection and the Palestinian nation will tremble the earth under the feet of the usurper Zionists," concluded the daily.

Country Ready To Aid Victims

LD2702131794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran has declared its readiness to assist the victims of the Hebron black Friday.

The Central News Unit reports that Mr. Mohajerani, head of the Committee for Supporting the Palestine Islamic Revolution [CSPIR], in an exclusive interview stated: The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to send pharmaceutical and food aid to those who suffered from the recent Zionist atrocity in Hebron through international relief organizations.

On the effects of the atrocity on the process of the Gaza-Jericho accord, the head of CSPIR said: The territory of occupied Palestine has witnessed a new move and fervor within the intifada. Though Nazareth used to be considered a safe city for the Zionists so far, it has witnessed popular revolt in recent days.

Referring to the fact that the recent Zionist action has once again exposed the false claims of those professing to support human rights, Mr. Mohajerani said: In line with other Islamic nations, Islamic states must also make a serious decision to resolve the Palestine issue.

In conclusion, he called on the people of Iran to take another practical step toward supporting the oppressed Palestinians by their solid presence on Jerusalem Day.

Commentary on Implications of Hebron Incident

NC2602125394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Interview with "expert" Mr. Ne'matzadeh of the News Research and Commentary Group by unidentified announcer; place and date not given]

[Text] Yesterday morning, the al-Ibrahimi shrine in the city of Hebron near Jerusalem witnessed a shattering catastrophe in which hundreds of fasting worshipers were fired upon by Zionists while they were praying and were made to wallow in blood and dust.

The incident was so catastrophic that it caused a swift eruption in the Palestinians' ranks. The Zionist regime immediately announced a state of emergency and put the finishing touches on the atrocity initiated by an armed Zionist by ordering its usurping soldiers to shoot at another group of Palestinians who had rushed to assist the wounded and they also joined the ranks of martyrs. We asked the expert of the News Research and Commentary Group to give us his assessment of the political dimensions of this incident:

[Begin recording] [Announcer] Mr. Ne'matzadeh, the Zionist regime is seeking to exonerate itself from the responsibility for this catastrophe by attributing it to a so-called mentally deranged or insane individual. I would like to know your opinion in this regard.

[Ne'matzadeh] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. With salutations to our dear compatriots and condolences on this shattering and soul searing incident, which has plunged the entire Islamic world in grief, I wish to state that it is natural that the Zionist regime, or any other criminal, would not wish to accept the negative consequences of a crime that he has committed. Therefore he resorts to blaming others. Israel is capitalizing on this atrocity but totally refuses to take responsibility for it. Can it be acceptable from the legal point of view that the Zionist officials are not responsible for this incident and its consequences?

Incidentally, the facts are contrary to the wishes of the usurpist regime. According to international law, the convention on prisoners of war, regulations regarding occupied areas, the Zionist regime is basically responsible for the security of the residents of the occupied areas which it controls. Therefore, regardless of who has perpetrated such a crime, if the Zionist regime is not able to ensure the security of the residents in the occupied areas, it should either evacuate these areas immediately and hand them over to the owners, or it should delegate the security of the occupied areas to UN forces.

Thus, such rhetoric is unacceptable in international law, and incidents with such dimensions and depth cannot be blamed on a single mentally unbalanced Zionist. In addition, the question arises: Who armed this allegedly demented individual? In principle, the arming of the Zionist residents in these settlements is a policy that the Zionist soldiers are implementing officially. It is the Zionist army that permits them to carry weapons. In addition to giving them weapons and permitting them to carry them about, the armed forces also trains them to use them. Thus, it is very easy to identify who is responsible for this incident.

Aside from this, while the al-Ibrahimi shrine is under the stringent control of the usurper Zionist regime's soldiers, and the fasting Palestinian worshipers passed through strict security checks on entering, how could armed Zionists pass through such a strict security system without any coordination on the part of the usurper armed forces and plunge the innocent people into blood and dust while they are praying?

Woe to their shamelessness. The Zionist regime considers itself absolved of this crime. After this incident—which is not considered an exceptional one in Palestine and is in complete conformity with the usual policy of the Zionist regime—the question that arises is: Why were the compromising Palestinians not attacked? Why did a mentally deranged individual not attack the team of Palestinian negotiators who were holding talks with the Zionist regime? It is clear that the objective was precisely predetermined. The Palestinian people are the main elements, the backbone of the people's uprising—that is, the devout stratum devoted to Islam. Thus, the targeting of the worshipers in a mosque while praying and fasting is in complete conformity with the policy of the Zionist regime.

The attack was aimed at the real enemy of the Zionist regime and therefore, the mental derangement of an individual or individuals involved is a mere fabrication on the part of political and propaganda apparatus of the Zionist regime.

This is one of the usual ploys of the political and propaganda apparatus of this regime. The blaze in the al-Aqsa Mosque in 1967, the holiest mosque in Islam after the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca and the Prophet's mosque in Medina, was also attributed to a lunatic. Only three years ago, a large number of Palestinian workers were massacred, and even that was attributed to a psychotic. The character of a madman has consistently been present in the history of the crimes of the Zionists and will continue to be so.

What is interesting is that we should realize that the head of the Zionist council resident in the Zionist settlement said that the main person responsible had no psychological aberrations or mental imbalance. If we are to assume that the person or persons responsible did have some degree of psychosis, then how about those who announced martial law immediately after this shattering crime? How about those who fired bullets at the other concerned Palestinians? How about those who shot and martyred those who had hastened to assist the wounded and had gathered outside the al- Khalil hospital to donate blood?

[Announcer] What objectives is the Israeli regime pursuing by resorting to such actions and what does it hope to gain in this manner?

[Ne'matzadeh] There are some issues the Zionist hierarchy might have in mind. First, Israel has reaped benefits from the Gaza-Jericho accord, and has already got what it wanted from the accord it signed with 'Arafat at present. Political legitimacy, international popularity, revamping of its warmongering image, official domination over Palestinian borders, highways, roads, settlements, internal and foreign security, security control and all else. So what is the importance of continuing the talks on accords? Now the time has come to once again show its true face, which is the same one that appeals to Zionist society and strengthens the Zionist regime's base inside Israel and at the same time undermines its political rivals.

In addition, you witnessed that Israel has targeted the Islamists. This is in itself a message, a threat which has the support of the West. You have observed that no one has condemned the Zionist regime or said that it is responsible. At most, they just condemned the incident.

[Announcer] In your opinion, what could be the repercussions of this incident? Is it possible that it will overshadow the negotiations pertaining to the 'Arafat-Israel compromise and halt this process?

[Ne'matzadeh] In my opinion, this does not seem possible. 'Arafat has burned his bridges and has passed the point of no return. He does not see any recourse but to succumb to the enemy. U.S. President Bill Clinton, who has sensed the danger of the possible repercussions of this incident on the talks, has invited the two sides, the Palestinians and the Israelis, to continue their talks in Washington. [end recording]

Commentary Examines Goals Behind Crime

NC2602195794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Unattributed political commentary]

[Text] The Ibrahimi Mosque crime cannot be viewed from a political viewpoint and be detached from the nature of the conflict in the area. The savage crime did not take place for political motives to have it be said that the occupied territory is witnessing political violence and that violence by its nature hits in all directions.

The attack on the worshipers in Hebron clearly shows the religious dimension of the crime. The Jewish settlers think that the Muslims must leave their areas, that these territories belong to Israel, and that whoever refuses to leave will have to be liquidated in an ugly way. It is clear that the attack on the Muslim worshipers in a sacred place reflects the depth of the Jewish hatred, which has been manifested in more than one way. The Talmudic mentality agrees with the logic of force used by the Jews against the Palestinian people and the other Muslim peoples.

The Zionist aim is to uproot the Palestinian people and force them to surrender so that the settlements can stay in the occupied territories and the Jews can have the upper hand politically, militarily, and economically.

In light of the clear Zionist aims, the practical response to this crime is not to absorb the emotional reaction of the Muslim masses and regard the incident as a transient moment of madness. The Muslims are called upon to seriously and genuinely support the Palestinian people by supporting the intifadah and enabling the Palestinians to exercise the right of legitimate defense. It is unreasonable for the Palestinian people to remain the victims of Zionist terrorism and the continuing madness while the governments and regimes call on the Palestinian people to refrain from exercising their right of self-defense on the pretext of facilitating the peace process.

The natural response to the Zionist crime is to make the Israelis understand that Palestinian blood is no less precious than Jewish blood, and that for every Palestinian that is killed an Israeli attacker must be killed. The battle in essence is one of existence between the Palestinian people and the new immigrant Jewish settlers. When the Jews seek to implement their designs through a Talmudic ideology, which they believe is sacred and regard as their strategic program, the resistance idea must rely on a solid basis, especially when the other ideas have been frustrated as a result of the miserable illusion of peace.

The series of unending violence, blood, and terrorism that is affecting the Palestinian people confirms that the talk about peace is only designed to dupe the Muslim masses and make them believe that the area is moving toward peaceful coexistence. This is at a time when the correct reaction is to give the masses freedom of action to prove their ability to defend the Muslim nation's sanctities and dignity. Restricting popular reaction will be the biggest service rendered to the Zionist-Western scheme in the area. Official, rhetorical reactions will not dress the wounds of the Palestinian people and will not make the Jews understand that their crimes will not remain unpunished. Israel is used to rhetorical statements and long communiques. But a single jihad operation in southern Lebanon or in the occupied territory is sufficient to teach the Jews many lessons. It will teach them that their security will always be threatened because security cannot be based on usurpation, terrorism, and the logic of force.

Explanations of Attack Questioned

LD2602203094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Once again hot blood has been shed in Palestine, and with the martyrdom of scores of Palestinian worshippers in the holy month of Ramadan, the world of Islam is mourning.

Yesterday morning, the secure sanctity of Prophet Abraham in the town of Hebron, near Beit al-Moqadas, went through a tragic and shocking incident in which hundreds of Muslim worshippers, while in prostration, were massacred.

The catastrophe was caused by armed Zionists.

These Zionist assailants continued to fire at the worshippers for a full ten minutes without any break. However, there was not shown any reaction by the armed Israeli troops who were stationed around the mosque.

Every minutes 900 bullets were sprayed at the worshippers' lines, and the Zionist attackers even had enough time to reload their machineguns.

The army of the Zionist regime only at the end of this heinous crime entered the scene. The troops took away the martyrs and put them in a mass grave. They also prevented blood donations to the wounded Palestinians who were transferred to a local hospital. Also by firing at the gathering of the Palestinians the military men killed and wounded scores of them.

The point noteworthy in this tragic incident relates to the statement of the Zionist regime's prime minister, in which he declared that the Zionist assailant who led the group of attackers was mad. In this way, the rulers in Israel, despite having planned such a plot, have once again attributed the entire catastrophe to someone else without taking responsibility for its negative impacts.

But the fact is that the mosque of prophet Abraham was under the siege and strict control of hundreds of Israeli military men [as heard]. Moreover, for months now the town of Hebron has been besieged by the Zionist troops. How then can it be imagined that, in the absence of any coordination with the Israeli Army, and while tough control was in force, several attackers could manage to massacre hundreds of people and drench the mosque compound with blood?

Of course this is not for the first time that such a major catastrophe has been committed by the Zionists in the occupied Palestine. The lives of hundreds, rather thousands, of defenseless human beings constantly fall victim to the sinister designs of the Zionist occupiers. However, in the end, by attributing such a major tragedy to a crazy individual, the Zionist regime is relieved of all responsibility in this regard.

Arson in the sacred Al-Aqsa mosque was attributed to a crazy man and also crushing of a number of Palestinians under the wheels of an Israeli truck was alluded to a madman in a bid to cover up such crimes. But while under international law and the provision set by the international community as well as the Fourth Geneva Convention, an occupier has full responsibility for controlling the regions under its control, the occupiers alone are answerable to any sort of insecurity in such regions. Hence any divestment of the Zionist regime's responsibility is unacceptable in legal terms. Moreover, what occurred yesterday, killing hundreds of fasting worshippers, in itself is the outcome of the Zionist regime's criminal acts.

In fact, arming of the Zionist residents in various settlements and imparting military training to them are governed by a policy which is being implemented by the occupier army of Israel itself. It is a usual policy which was supplying the Jewish settlers with weapons so as to kill the Palestinians in the event of any move, even a doubtful one, does not allow the Palestinians to defend themselves and to obtain weapons for this purpose.

The world people now pose this question: If the international community, through its silence and by issuing ceremonial resolutions, had not bypassed the tragedy of Palestine and if the United States, through its political, economic and military aids to and its covert and overt support for Israel, had not left it free to commit such crimes, would the oppressed nation have still become the victim of the Zionists' racist designs?

U.S. Reaction To Events Viewed

LD2602204694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Yesterday's brutal and barbaric attack on the Palestinian worshippers at the Abraham mosque in Hebron, which was carried out by the Zionists and during which hundreds of Muslims were martyred and wounded, has caused a wave of the world Muslims wrath and hatred. The leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khamene'i, in an important message in connection with the crime, described the painful catastrophe a reminder of the mass murders carried out by the Zionists during the occupation, saying that these crimes are now being committed openly and before the eyes of the world people.

In part of his message, the leader of the Islamic revolution said today: The bitter reality, that the oppressed Palestinian nation is compelled to carry out a struggle on its own homeland to be able to live there, has once again been dawned upon that nation.

The leader of the Islamic revolution, then addressing the world bodies and the governments, the so-called defenders of the human rights that for years have ignored the human rights violations of a nation in Palestine, posing the question as to whether this time, too, these organizations will continue their silence and whether those having forced peace with the usurper enemy will realize their mistakes.

Yesterday's horrible crime committed at the Abraham mosque in Hebron is a shocking event which cannot easily be overlooked and, as initial reaction, covered by the news reports of mass media, show the dimensions of the crime are so widespread that even the Western political circles and the supporters of the Zionist regime have shown a negative reaction. In this connection the U.S. State Department released a statement yesterday strongly condemning the horrible and terrorist attack. The U.S. administration in the statement, saying that the crime stresses the need for expediting the Arab-Israeli talks, has called on the two sides negotiating for the signing of the compromising agreement between Palestine and Israel to continue their talks. At the same time, France and Russia, through their official stance in the world bodies, such as the Amnesty International and the human rights organizations, in their statements have condemned the crime and along with that the leaders of the Islamic governments and organizations have also strongly condemned the Zionist attacks against the Muslims.

What happened at Hebron yesterday has given rise to strong reactions on a large scale and in the political circles and it undoubtedly deserves condemnation. The Muslim government and nation have great responsibility in following up to find who are behind the crime. But from the political point of view what has provoked the Western concern and the concern of the U.S. with respect to the consequences of the horrible incident is the impact that this can have on the future of the peace talks, especially when nothing is clearly predictable as yet. Further there are many questions posed with regard to the Muslim reaction over the crime and Western political analysts cannot easily find answers for these questions.

Commentary Says Coexistence 'Questionable'

NC2702098894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[Text] The fury and condemnation at the heinous atrocity perpetrated by the Zionists in massacring fasting worshipers at the al-Ibrahimi shrine in Hebron continue unabated. The Muslim Palestinians protested yesterday against this merciless killing, which has grievously wounded the conscience of mankind. They held strikes and, despite the curfew imposed by the Zionist armed forces, they spilled onto the streets to demonstrate and clashed with the Zionist soldiers.

In these clashes, three Palestinians were killed by the Zionist executioners and nearly 50 others were wounded. Thus, the number of victims killed or wounded at the hands of the Zionist forces in the past two days has reached 300. The indignant Palestinian demonstrators attacked 40 Israeli targets with bombs. One of the most important and distinctive characteristics of the demonstrations in the past two days in the territories occupied since 1948—where the Palestinians are a minority of the population—is the flourishing of the intifadah.

The staging of extensive demonstrations in the cities of Nazareth and Yafo and the southern environs of Tel Aviv by the incensed Palestinians and the setting afire of dozens of vehicles and stores belonging to the Zionists are unprecedented in the past decade. The anger and frenzy of the Palestinian Muslims at the staggering atrocity committed by the Zionists in the al-Ibrahimi shrine was so extensive that for the first time the Zionist regime has imposed a curfew in order to protect the lives of the Jews in the settlements the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

According to political observers, at its session today the Zionist cabinet may make some decisions in order to placate the enraged Muslims because of the pressure due to the spread of the Palestinian Muslims' intifadah in the past two days. Some Palestinian prisoners may be released in this regard.

The UN Security Council session is to conclude its deliberations today on the recent crime of the Zionists. In view of the fact that the United States gives quite a lot of arms and financial and economic assistance to the Zionist regime and thus is a de facto accomplice to all the crimes of this racist regime, it is possible that in its usual way the United States will use its influence in the Security Council to prevent the UN from playing its legitimate role in the Palestinian crisis.

Political analysts believe that the heart wrenching crime at the al-Ibrahimi shrine has highlighted the fact that the greater the international legitimacy attributed to the Zionists, the more crimes they will commit. This incident further proves that the Zionist settlements in the occupied territories are a major problem, and coexistence between the Palestinians and the residents of the Zionist settlements, which is envisaged in the Gaza-Jericho accord, is very questionable.

The extensive demonstrations by the people and students in Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon, and the demand for the immediate cessation of the talks and the breaking of all kinds of relations with the transgressor Zionist regime show that the Muslim people of the region do not concur with the policies adopted by their governments. This places the Arab countries in a position where they have to make a fateful choice on whether to choose their people or the Zionist regime.

Regional, International Impact of Crime Viewed

NC2802080294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The blood of the martyrs shed in the massacre of the fasting Palestinian worshipers at the shrine of Abraham, peace be upon him, in Hebron continues to have strong repercussions on the regional and international levels. The rising waves of the Palestinians' intifadah, which have unprecedentedly intensified as a result of this soul rending incident, have extended to include the Arab countries of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and have sparked off unprecedented and extensive demonstrations and protest marches.

The leaders of Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, have suspended the compromise talks in Washington in answer to the people's demands and in protest of the massacre of the Palestinians. This is considered a major political defeat for the United States, which tried to mitigate the impact of this incident on the compromise talks since the incident at the Abrahamite mosque become known.

After the massacre U.S. President Bill Clinton personally invited Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister of the Zionist regime, and Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO chief, to go to Washington immediately to continue the compromise talks until a definite conclusion is achieved. The Zionist regime and 'Arafat, who opportunistically and quickly gave a positive reply to the invitation, are now facing a political impasse with the suspension of the talks by Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Thus, Yasir 'Arafat, who claims the leadership of the Palestinians, is facing a new political defeat because of his haste and his over eagerness to go to Washington. Political experts believe that possibly within the next few hours, 'Arafat too will announce his decision to dispense with going to Washington for talks with Rabin.

Meanwhile, the growing impact of the incident at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque on the international level has placed the UN Security Council under pressure to adopt a resolution against the Zionist regime. During its previous session, which was held after the incident, the Security Council was unable to reach a decision on a resolution because of pressures by the United States, which wanted them to be content with a mere statement on the incident. However, with the growing impact of the Zionist regime's crimes and the extensive reactions to it in various countries of the world, as well as protests by regional and international organizations, the Security Council has now agreed to consider a resolution condemning the massacre of the Palestinian worshipers.

The current developments in occupied Palestine and on the regional and international levels during the past few days show that the Zionist regime and its Western mentors who were behind the recent crime have now lost the initiative despite all their efforts and that they lack the power to confront the repercussions stemming from this incident. This impotence is seen especially in some Arab regimes such as Egypt which, by suppressing the Muslims' demonstrations protesting the Zionist regime and by continuing political links with the regime, has come into confrontation with the popular movement. But with the extensive wave of Islamic awakening in the region and in the world, the policy of suppression definitely will not only be unable to stop the raging wave of developments, but will also further expand this wave.